PZ
3
.D839M
copy 2

FT MEADE
GenColl

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Great Parisian Success.

MONSIEUR, MADAM and the BABY

PHILADELPHIA,
T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS.

MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY.

A SERIES OF CONFESSIONS.

BY GUSTAVE DROZ.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
BY REAVEL SAVAGE.

"MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY" is a book that will certainly delight everybody, while fathers and mothers will be literally charmed with it. Gustave Droz, its author, is one of France's most prominent writers, and his work, now first given to the public in an English dress, has already run through over a hundred editions in Paris, where it is still vastly popular. It is divided into three parts, "The Bachelor," "Housekeeping," and "The Family," and gives with a degree of realism only equalled by Zola all the details in the experiences of a young man, a husband, a wife and a baby. These details are Parisian from first to last, sparkling with delicate humor and overflowing with sound sense and pathos. The baby is a boy of the most natural description, full of pranks, puzzling questions and a desire to be a big man like papa. He has pillow fights with his father, romps in the garden of the Luxembourg, gets caught in the rain in the country, pays New Year's visits with his parents, paddles in pools of water, is always terribly hungry, has a spell of sickness that nearly finishes him, but gets well again and is as lively as ever, and, in short, is just such a boy as is met with every day. That he will win the love of all who read about him cannot be doubted. "MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY" should create a sensation as marked as that produced by "Helen's Babies." It has been faithfully translated. Of course, it will find hosts of readers, for it is as interesting and agreeable as realistic.

PHILADELPHIA:
T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS;
306 CHESTNUT STREET.

COPYRIGHT.—1881.

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS.

PZ3
.P839M
Copy 2

HENRY GRÉVILLE'S CELEBRATED NOVELS.

Dosia. A Russian Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"DOSIA" is a charming story of Russian society, is written with a rare grace of style, is brilliant, pleasing and attractive. It is an exquisite creation, and is pure and fresh as a rose.

Xénie's Inheritance. A Tale of Russian Life. *By Henry Gréville.*

The different characters that figure in this delightful love story are all drawn with that spirited and delicate touch for which this author is especially noted.

Marrying Off a Daughter. A Society Novel. *By Henry Gréville.*

"MARRYING OFF A DAUGHTER" is gay, sparkling, and pervaded by a delicious tone of quiet humor, and will be read and enjoyed by thousands of readers.

Sonia. A Russian Love Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"SONIA" is charming and refined, and is a powerful, graceful, domestic story, being most beautifully told—giving one a very distinct idea of every-day home life in Russia.

The Trials of Raissa. A Russian Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"THE TRIALS OF RAÏSSA" is a love story full of fascination and power. The action takes place in St. Petersburg, the country and Siberia. The descriptions are admirable.

Savéli's Expiation. A Powerful Russian Love Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"SAVÉLI'S EXPIATION" is one of the most dramatic and most powerful novels ever published, while a pathetic love story, running all through its pages, is presented for relief.

The Princess Oghérof. A Russian Love Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"THE PRINCESS OGHÉROF" is a thoroughly fascinating love story. Its interest is intense and sustained, and at no point does the reader find a dull line. It is purity itself.

Bonne-Marie. A Tale of Normandy and Paris. *By Henry Gréville.*

"BONNE-MARIE" is a charming story, the scenes of which are laid in Normandy and in Paris. It will no doubt create a sensation, such is its freshness, beauty, and delicacy.

Philomène's Marriages. A Tale of Normandy. *By Henry Gréville.*

The heroine's life is narrated in a most fascinating manner, and is an admirable picture of country home-life, full of wit, of a high moral tone, and full of interest.

Lucie Rodey. A New Society Novel. *By Henry Gréville.*

"LUCIE RODEY" teaches a great lesson, and in it all readers will find the wife and mother "faithful unto death," though exposed to lots of trials and temptations.

Markof, the Russian Violinist. A Russian Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"MARKOF" is an art study, full of beautiful prose and true poetry, and is such a work as could be written only by such an artist and genius as the author of "DOSIA" is.

Dournof. A Russian Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

"DOURNOF" is a charming and graphic story of Russian life, containing careful studies of Russian character, and character drawing, which are most admirable.

Pretty Little Countess Zina. A Charming Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

Zina, the Countess, bears a resemblance to Dosia—that bewitching creature—in her dainty wilfulness, while the ward and cousin, Vassalissa, is an entire new creation.

A Friend; or, L'Ami. A Society Novel. *By Henry Gréville.*

This tender and touching picture of French home-life will touch many hearts, as it shows how the love of a true and good woman will meet with its reward and triumph at last.

Gabrielle; or, The House of Maurèze. *By Henry Gréville.*

"GABRIELLE; OR, THE HOUSE OF MAURÈZE," is a very thrilling and touching story, is most skilfully told, and follows the life of the girl whose title it bears.

48655

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

No production of any modern French author has been more extensively read, enjoyed and favorably criticised than the work, a translation of which is now first submitted to the American public.

"MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY" took Paris by storm, and so great has been the continued demand for it that it has, at the time of making this translation, attained its one hundred and second edition. I was induced to undertake the translation of the book by an appreciation of its intrinsic worth, and by the fact that no English rendition of it has ever appeared.

As the reader will perceive at the first glance, the work is a collection of exquisitely drawn

sketches, each independent of the others—and, indeed, a story in itself—yet tending to a common end. These sketches are divided into three parts: "The Bachelor," "Housekeeping" and "The Family." The first part is thoroughly Parisian, maintaining throughout a brilliancy of style and a power of fascination seldom equalled. The second and third parts, which treat respectively of Madame and the Baby, are characterized by commingled pathos and dreamy philosophy. They not only differ from anything of the kind ever offered to the public, but challenge the attention and impress their contents indelibly upon the mind of the reader.

The translation of the work has been conscientiously made and it is hoped that, where the original possesses so much brilliancy, its reflection may not be entirely devoid of beauty.

REAVEL SAVAGE.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

DEAR MADAME:

If, on opening this volume, you should, perchance, cast your eyes upon something you know nothing about, do not, I beseech you, be in too great a hurry to call the house-maid and cry: "Into the fire with this!"

In the first part of my book, it is a bachelor who speaks, and I must ask your indulgence and pardon for him. Do not condemn him too hastily—you would regret it, I am sure, for, after awhile, this celibate takes to himself a little wife, and, my word for it, makes a most charming husband.

Is it necessary for me to say that he is soon a father, and, therefore, merits all your sympathy?

My embarrassment is not slight, I assure you!

I would advise you to begin at the end, were it not that, in order to love the father, it is necessary to know the man; and all these little studies are connected by a chain, not a single link of which I would wish to break.

Therefore, dear Madame, be courageous. If, at times, you disagree with the author, close one eye — a sure means of reading but half and of falling out with no one.

Your respectful servant,

GUSTAVE DROZ.

CONTENTS.

PART FIRST.—THE BACHELOR.

Chapter		Page
I.	MY FIRST MIDNIGHT SUPPER	27
II.	THE SOUL IN PAIN	33
III.	MADAME DE K——	46
IV.	SOUVENIRS OF LENT—THE SERMON	53
V.	SOUVENIRS OF LENT—THE PENITENT	59
VI.	SOUVENIRS OF LENT—A FIRESIDE CHAT	65
VII.	SOUVENIRS OF LENT—A DREAM	72
VIII.	THE AMBASSADOR'S BALL	87
IX.	PRIVATE THEATRICALS—MY AUNT AS VENUS	96

PART SECOND.—HOUSEKEEPING.

I.	FATHER Z——'S INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE	107
II.	AT THE TOWN HALL—AT CHURCH—MADAME'S IMPRESSIONS	114
III.	MY WEDDING NIGHT	124

Chapter Page

IV. THE BLUE DIARY—MADAME'S IMPRESSIONS AGAIN..... 133

V. THE BLUE DIARY AGAIN..... 143

VI. MY WIFE GOES TO THE BALL..... 150

VII. A FALSE ALARM..... 162

VIII. I SUP WITH MY WIFE..... 182

IX. FROM ONE THING TO ANOTHER..... 190

X. A BIT OF CONVERSATION..... 196

XI. THE FOOT WARMER..... 204

PART THIRD.—THE FAMILY.

I. THE BABY..... 210

II. NEW YEAR'S DAY IN THE FAMILY..... 219

III. THE WIFE'S LETTERS..... 230

IV. OLD RECOLLECTIONS. THE BABIES..... 239

V. THE LITTLE BOOTS..... 246

VI. BABIES AND PAPAS..... 255

VII. FIRST BREECHES..... 265

VIII. COUNTRY BABIES. DUCKLINGS AND LITTLE CHICKENS..... 272

IX. AUTUMN. CABBAGE SOUP AND HEAVY RAINS. 280

X. HE WOULD HAVE BEEN FORTY YEARS OLD. 286

XI. CONVALESCENCE..... 291

XII. THE FAMILY..... 295

MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY.

PART FIRST.—THE BACHELOR.

CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST MIDNIGHT SUPPER.

GREAT HEAVENS! I have forgotten her name! And yet I loved her well, the adorable creature! How strange it is that one feels so rich on rummaging in one's old secretary; how many forgotten sighs, how many pretty little bits of trinkets out of fashion and covered with dust are there! But no matter.

I was eighteen years old then, and, upon my honor, had a heart fresh and somewhat sentimental. It was in the ear of this dear—I've her name on the very end of my tongue: it ends with an i-n-e—'twas, however, in her ear, the dear girl! that I murmured my first words

of love, and upon her rosy lips beside a pretty dimple, that I pressed my first kiss. I adored her and she reciprocated my affection. I really believe I should have married her, and with pleasure, too, I assure you, if, at certain moments, her past had not inspired me with doubts and her present with inquietude. No one is perfect—and I was somewhat jealous.

One evening, 'twas Christmas-eve, I called upon her with the intention of escorting her to a supper given by a friend of mine whom I esteemed highly, and who died long since, I know not where, while an examining magistrate.

I ascended my dear one's staircase, and was surprised to find her ready to accompany me. She wore, I recollect it still, a squarely and somewhat deeply cut bodice that became her well. She took my arm, singing an air of which she was very fond, and we soon found ourselves in the street.

Have you ever experienced the joy of a youth just budding into manhood when his sweetheart leans upon his arm? His very temerity frightens him, and he trembles at the thought of a paternal correction on the morrow; but all these fears are dissipated by the ineffable pleasure of the moment. He is free, is a man, loves, is loved, and feels that he has already placed one foot forward in the race of life. He wishes that all Paris could see him, and yet trembles at the mere thought of being recognized; he would give his little finger to have three hairs upon his upper lip and

one wrinkle on his brow — he would give more if a cigar would not sicken him, — if a glass of punch would not make him sneeze!

When we arrived at my friend's, there had already gathered together a numerous assembly; peals of laughter, intermingled with exclamations and the ringing of dishes, the covers of which were being removed, greeted us as we stood in the ante-chamber. I was somewhat moved; I felt that I was the most youthful of the entire company, and feared to enter into the saturnalia. "Courage, my boy!" said I to myself; "be like the rest. Your sweetheart is here and her eyes are upon you!" The idea that I might be sick on the morrow tormented me not a little. I imagined my poor mother bringing me a cup of tea, and weeping over my indiscretions; but I banished all these miserable spectres of the consequences, and everything went well until supper. Some one slightly teased my sweetheart and one or two persons even admired her under my very nose, but I entered all these details in the account of profit and loss and was, in all sincerity, ridiculously proud and supremely happy.

"My children," suddenly cried the host; "the moment has arrived for a violent assault upon the delicacies! Let us pass into the dining-room."

These words were received with cries of joy, and the entire company gathered in wild disorder around a large table, at either end of which I perceived a plate filled with those immense cigars of which it was

impossible for me to smoke one quarter of the smallest one, without feeling large drops of cold sweat standing upon my forehead.

"This will certainly bring about a catastrophe! But prudence, my boy; only feign to smoke!" said I to myself.

I never could understand how my sweetheart was placed at the left of our host. This did not suit me at all; but what was to be done? And then our host was twenty-five years old, and his fine figure together with his moustache rendered him a perfect ideal—a most bewitching demon: I felt a certain respect for him.

"Well," said he, with enviable composure, "well, you're all ready, I suppose? You all know that whoever feel ill at ease may remove their coats!" Then, laughing, and with lightning rapidity, he deposited kisses to the right and left upon the lips of his two fair neighbors, one of whom was my sweetheart! I felt my hair stand on end, and I burned like a glowing coal; but then, this feat of our host was greeted with approving bursts of merriment, and from this moment the supper progressed with charming animation.

"My little children,"—this was the usual expression of this diabolical examining magistrate.—"let us attack the cold meats, the sausages, the salad and the turkey! Let us attack the buns, the cheese, the oysters and the grapes! Let us attack the entire range of victims! Slaves, draw the corks! Let us eat all at once,—no order, no symmetry! Be oriental,

absurd and adorable! They never sup otherwise in the heart of Africa! We must mingle poetry with our pleasures: pass me the cheese with the turkey! Ah! ah! ah! I am rather strange and incomprehensible; is it not so?"

And he impressed two more kisses upon the lips of his fair neighbors.

If I had not been already intoxicated, upon my honor, I should have caused a scene. But I was giddy and morose. The others laughed, shouted and sang, while the dishes jingled. A noisy popping of corks and smashing of glasses filled my ears; but it appeared to me that a cloud had settled between myself and the outer world, and, in spite of the evidence of the reality, I believed myself deceived by a dream. I could distinguish, although only in a confused manner, the animated glances exchanged by the guests and the increasing redness of their faces. My sweetheart seemed changed. Suddenly—'twas like a flash—my well-beloved, my angel, my dream—she whom I would have married in the morning—leaned towards the examining magistrate, and (I still shudder at the thought of it) devoured three truffles which were upon his plate. My heart was full; it seemed as if it would burst—and then—

But here my memory fails me. What happened afterwards? I never knew. I was unconscious. I remember, however, that I was taken home in a hack. I insisted upon knowing where *she* was, pitifully

inquiring: "Where is she? Oh! where is she?" They told me that she had taken her departure two hours before.

The next morning, the mere recollection of the truffles on the plate of the examining magistrate nearly drove me mad. I entertained, for the moment, the idea of entering a monastery—but time—well, you know how time calms the tempests of the heart!

But, great heavens! what is her name, the dear girl? It ends with an i-n-e. No; I believe it ends with an a!

CHAPTER II.

THE SOUL IN PAIN.

TO MONSIEUR CLAUDE DE L———,
At the Seminary of P—sur-C— (Haute-Saône).

'Tis a great joy for my soul, my dear Claude, to claim you as my own for a few moments of conversation. Need I say it? I cannot think of the life we led but yesterday, as fellow-students at the College of the Jesuits, without a pious emotion. I think of our long chats under the grand old trees, of the pious pilgrimages which we made to the Calvary of the Father Superior, of our dear lectures, and of the yearning of our two souls towards the eternal source of all that is beautiful and great. I still see the little chapel that you erected, one day, in your desk, and the tiny candles we made for it and lighted once, in the middle of our geography lesson. Delicious souvenirs, how dear you are to my heart! Charming details of a calm and pure life, what happiness your memory imparts. Time, in separating me from you, seems only to have rendered you all the more present to my mind. I have lived, alas! during these six months; but, by acquiring worldly knowledge, I have learned to love more dearly the holy ignorance of my past life. Always wiser than myself, you have remained in the

ways of the Lord; friend, you have understood the divine mission reserved for you; you have not desired to knock at the profane gate that guards the entrance to this world, to this cavern, I might say, where I am now tossed about like a frail ship in a mighty tempest. And yet, who will say that the anger of the wave is not mere child's-play when compared to that of the passions? Happy, thrice happy friend, who knows not that which I have learned, whose eyes have not yet measured the abyss in which my gaze has been lost!

But what could I do? Was I not obliged, in spite of my vocation as well as in spite of the tender friendship which called me to your side, was I not, I repeat, obliged to obey the exigencies of my name and the wishes of my father who destined me to the military profession for the defence of a noble cause which you, also, defend? In short, I obeyed, and left the College of the Jesuits never to return again!

I entered the world, my heart filled with those wholesome fears to which our pious education had given birth. My first step was made in dread, and in an instant I recoiled in horror! I am only nineteen years of age, but have already reflected deeply, which, coupled with the experience of my pious preceptors, has given my soul a precocious maturity which enables me to judge of men and things; moreover, my faith is so firmly grounded and has penetrated so deeply into my very being that I may open my eyes to that which is around me without danger. I do not

fear for my own salvation, but am deeply distressed when I think of the future of our modern society; and I pray God with all the fervor of my soul, which He has ever guarded from evil, that He turn not his benevolent eye from our unhappy country.

Even here, at the residence of my cousin, the Marquise de K—— de C——, where I now am, I discover nothing but frivolity in the men and dangerous coquetry in the women. The pernicious breath of the age seems to penetrate even into these high regions of the French aristocracy. Now and then, science and morality are discussed, but even these discussions appear to be attacks upon our holy faith, and, indeed, involve matters on which our Holy Father, the Pope, alone should pass judgment. Thus: God permits, at this moment, that certain would-be savans, —you understand me—pretend to explain, by a new theory, the origin of beings; and, in spite of the excommunication which assuredly awaits them, they cast the gauntlet of ferocious and impious defiance to all our revered beliefs and traditions!

I have not desired to inquire into such turpitudes, but it is with a heavy heart that I see men of learning and illustrious names attach importance to this vileness.

As to the manners and customs of the society whose air I breathe, they are not, and really could not be, immoral; but they are, nevertheless, exceedingly frivolous and of a horribly shocking freedom. I will only

cite one example—that which has impressed me most deeply.

A short distance from the château is a charming little stream, shaded by grand old willows; the current is somewhat rapid, but the water is as transparent as crystal, and the bed of the brook is covered with so fine a sand that one sinks into it as into a Turkish rug. Will you believe me, dear friend, when I assure you that, on warm days, all the inhabitants of the château, together and without distinction of sex, go there to bathe! A simple bathing dress veils but imperfectly the strange and singularly daring modesty of the ladies. Pardon me, my pious friend, for entering into these details, and, perhaps, troubling the calmness of your soul by the picture of worldly scenes; but I promised to impart to you all my impressions, as well as my most secret thoughts. 'Twas a sacred promise which I shall keep.

But I avow that these bathing scenes were revolting to me in the highest sense, even when I first heard them mentioned. I experienced a sort of disgust easily understood, and absolutely refused to take part in such proceedings. I was certainly teased about it, but these worldly railleries could neither affect the calm of my soul nor change the firmness of my determination.

Yesterday, however, about five o'clock in the afternoon, the Marquise sent for me, and spoke with such cleverness that I was forced to consent to serve as her cavalier.

We set out. The waiting-maid carried our bathing dresses, as well as that of my sister, who was to join us at the bath.

"I know," said my cousin, as she leaned somewhat too heavily upon my arm, "that you swim remarkably well. The rumor of your exploits has reached us even here. Now, will you not teach me to float, Robert?"

"My dear cousin," I replied, "I attach but little importance to these trifling physical advantages. I swim tolerably well—nothing more."

And I turned aside in order to avoid an extremely penetrating perfume emanating from her beautiful hair. You know well that I am subject to nervous attacks.

"But, my dear child, these physical advantages are not to be disdained, methinks!"

This "dear child" pleased me not at all. My cousin is twenty-six years of age, it is true; but I am no longer a "dear child," and, moreover, this appellation denoted a familiarity which I had by no means desired. It was, on the part of the Marquise, a consequence of that frivolity of mind, of that freedom of language which I had already remarked, but nothing more. I was shocked. She continued:

"An exaggerated modesty finds no place in our society,"—and she turned towards me, laughingly. "You would make a charming cavalier, my little Robert; and that which is wanting in you could be very easily acquired. For example: let the Marquis'

valet dress your hair; he would suit you admirably, and I know you would be satisfied with the result."

Of course, you understand, my dear Claude, that I replied to these remarks with a coldness that could leave no doubt as to my intentions.

"I repeat, cousin," said I, "that I attach but little importance to such things."

I emphasized my words by a firm, icy glance. 'Twas then, for the first time — for I had not regarded my companion until then — that I perceived the profane elegance of her toilet, an elegance to which, unhappily, her perishable beauty serves as a pretext and an encouragement.

Her arms were bare, her wrists entirely concealed by a profusion of magnificent bracelets, and her shoulders but slightly veiled by a light covering of transparent lace. In a word, the desire to please was plainly visible in all the details of her toilet. I was deeply moved at the sight of so much frivolity, and I blushed in pity—almost in shame.

We at last arrived at the stream. My cousin sank into, I cannot say sat down upon, the grass, throwing back her long, wavy hair which hung from her chignon. The word chignon, in its worldly signification, means that prominence so characteristic of the back of a woman's head. It is produced by a gathering and knotting together of the hair at the above-mentioned locality. I have inferred, from certain allusions, that some of these chignons are anything but natural.

There are women — too worthy daughters of Eve — who purchase the production of the human scalp, which misery or death puts on the market. It is heart-rending!

"How terribly warm it is, my little cousin," said she, fanning herself. "I am in constant agony, during such a temperature, lest M. de Beaurenard's nose should explode and take fire! Ah! ah! ah! My word of honor!"

And she laughed freely at this pleasantry, which, to say the least, was sufficiently unseemly and without much point. M. de Beaurenard, who is a friend of the Marquis, possesses a face rather highly colored.

I executed a polite smile, which she, doubtlessly mistook for one of approbation, for she entered, then and there, into a conversation or, rather, into a nameless loquaciousness, commingling the oddest sentiments and the strangest religious ideas imaginable—the calm of the fields and the whirl and bustle of the world — and all this with a freedom of gesture, a charm of worldly expression, an animated look and a sort of terrestrial poetry by which any other than myself would have been subdued.

"Confess, Robert, that this little nook is an adorable spot."

"Certainly, cousin."

"And then, these old willows that bow their hoary heads to the stream! See how lovingly the flowers of the field embrace their withered trunks! Are they not

wonderful, this young, graceful and silvery verdure and these delicate, supple branches? How much youth, grace and freshness spring from these old trunks that seem blasted and cursed!"

"The good God would never curse a vegetable, cousin."

"That may be; but I cannot help discovering something human in these old willows! Their eternal old age has an air of punishment; they suffer and expiate, these old reprobates of the streams, these old Quasimodos of the fields! Do you blame me, my little cousin, if this is the impression they make upon me? Who will assure me that the willow is not the last incarnation of the fisherman who died without confessing?"

And she laughed aloud.

"These ideas are so pagan and so thoroughly contrary to our dogmas, that I am forced, in order to explain them, to suppose that you are but jesting!"

"Jesting, my little cousin? Not the least in the world! But you are surely no longer in the very first stages of youth! Go, prepare for the bath; I shall enter the tent and do the same. Good-bye for a few moments, my little cousin!"

Raising the side of the tent, she entered, waving her hand to me with an air of extreme coquetry.

How strange a mystery is the heart of woman!

I sought a secluded spot, thinking of this conversation as I went, and in an instant I had donned my

bathing costume. I thought of you, my pious friend, as I buttoned my jacket and cuffs. How many times have you assisted me to perform this operation, in the execution of which I was so awkward! This finished, I sprang into the water, and was on the point of striking out, when the voice of the Marquise saluted my ears. She was in conversation with her waiting-maid in the tent. I stopped and listened, not from vile curiosity, but from a sincere desire to become better acquainted with this soul, naturally good, but led astray.

"But no, Julie," said the Marquise, "I do not wish to hear you speak any longer of your horrible waterproof bonnet. The water gets in and there is no such thing as getting it out! Simply plait my hair into a small braid and that will suffice."

"But Madame's hair will get wet!"

"Well, you'll powder it afterwards; nothing dries better than powder, and, as it happens, I intend to wear my blue silk this evening. You will use some blonde powder. My child, are you really losing your senses? I told you to alter my bathing clothes, but you have scarcely touched them."

"I was afraid it might prevent Madame's swimming well."

"Swimming! Can't you see that the want of alteration prevents my swimming well? Can't you see, my child—can't you *see?*"

The canvas of the tent thereupon being agitated, I understood that my cousin was donning the bathing

costume in question rather impatiently, in order that she might expose its faults more plainly to this other "dear child."

"I don't wish to have the air of being wrapped up in a blanket, it is true; yet I do not wish, on the other hand, to be deprived of the free use of my limbs! Will you never get it into your head, Julie, that this stuff does not give?"

Does it not require a weak mind, my pious friend, to dwell upon such things? To me they seemed so vain that I suffered from being an involuntary assistant at the above-described scene, and I agitated the water rather forcibly to announce my presence and put an end to a conversation which so shocked me.

"I'm coming, Robert; only remain in the water. Has your sister arrived yet?" said my cousin, raising the pitch of her voice.

The canvas was raised and my cousin appeared. I cannot tell why, but I trembled as at the approach of danger, as the Marquise advanced towards me. She took several steps over the fine sand, removing the while the golden rings from her fair fingers, after which she gave them to Julie, and, with a movement which I still see but which it is impossible for me to describe, raised her foot and cast her tiny, red silk sandals into the grass.

She had only advanced two or three steps, but I already remarked a strangeness in her gait. She walked with seemingly timid steps; her white arms,

pressed closely to her form, appeared abandoned to the caprices of her costume, and trembled at her slightest movement.

I turned away my eyes—'twas too much! I felt myself blush to the temples at the mere thought that a Marquise de K—— de C——, that my own cousin, could so far forget herself as to appear, in broad daylight, in such a bathing dress. There was nothing womanlike about her, save her plaited hair enveloped in a net. She seemed like a strange young man, slight and elegant—one of those beings who haunt the dreams and sleepless nights of fever, one of those beings towards whom an unknown power attracts us, and who too nearly resemble angels not to be demons.

"Well, Robert, what are you thinking of? Give me your hand and assist me into the water!"

And she cautiously dipped her delicate foot into the crystal stream.

"It always causes a shiver, at first, but the water must be delightful to-day!" said she. "What is the matter with you? Your hand trembles! Poor child, you are chilled!"

The fact is that my trembling was caused neither by fear nor cold, but that, on approaching the Marquise, the penetrating perfume, exhaled from her hair, affected my head, and in my nervous state you will easily understand that I was on the point of swooning. But I mastered my uneasiness. My cousin grasped my hand frankly, firmly, just as one grasps the head of

a cane or the rail of a stair case, and we ascended the stream. My rôle confused me! Ah! my dear Claude, to how much misery and fear would your pure soul have been exposed, could you but have seen me in the position in which I was placed! Strong as I am, thanks to the firm foundation of my education, I, nevertheless, was afraid, and, with my whole heart, which is still pure, I prayed God to guard me from evil. But permit me to continue my narration.

As we ascended, the stream grew deeper; the Marquise, from time to time, as the water mounted higher and higher, gave vent to little shrieks of fright, which resembled the hissing of a serpent, after which she laughed aloud and came nearer and nearer to me. Finally, she stood still, and, turning towards me, looked straight into my eyes. I felt the solemnity of the moment. I knew that the precipice was at my very feet; my heart throbbed as if it would burst, and my head burned as if on fire.

"And now teach me to float, Robert. Straight out, the arms pressed closely against the body—that's it, is it not?"

"Yes, cousin, and move the hands slightly to and fro."

"Now then, all right! Ready?—one, two, three!—how childish I am!—I'm afraid!—But do support me just a little bit."

'Twas at this moment that I should have said:

"No, cousin, no, Madame, I am not the man to support you; I do not wish—"

But I did not dare to say all this. My tongue clove to the roof of my mouth and refused to pronounce a single word! I put out my arm towards her.

Alas! 'twas a fault—perhaps, an irreparable one!

On seeing this fair woman extended upon the crystal water, pardon, oh! pardon me, but I adored her! I abridge: When I saw her thus, it seemed to me that all my blood rushed back to my heart; a mortal thrill ran through my whole being—a thrill of indignation and shame, doubtless! My eyes were dimmed; it seemed to me that my soul was leaving my body, and I fainted, clutching her and dragging her with me to the bottom of the stream!

I heard a terrific shriek; I felt her arms tighten about my neck, her clenched fingers enter into my flesh and all was over. I had lost consciousness!

When I revived, I was lying upon the grass; Julie was rubbing my hands and the Marquise, in her bathing clothes, from which the water streamed in torrents, was holding a bottle of salts to my nostrils. Her glance was severe, although not entirely devoid of a shadow of suppressed satisfaction.

"Child!" she exclaimed. "Big baby!"

You know the facts now, my pious friend. Oh! be charitable! Give me counsel, and bless heaven that your life is passed far from the scenes of these worldly tempests! With heart and soul,

Your sincere friend,

ROBERT DE K—— DE C——.

CHAPTER III.

MADAME DE K——.

IT is quite possible that you know Madame de K——; if so, I congratulate you, for she is a most remarkable person. Her face is pretty, but no one ever says of her: "Heavens! the pretty woman!" —one invariably exclaims: "Madame de K——? Great Jove, the fine woman!"

Do you note the difference?—it is easily comprehended! Her great charm is rather that which one divines than that which one sees. Ah! Great Jove, the fine woman!"

This is the exclamation always heard after the repast, when one has dined at Madame de K——'s, and when her husband, who is, unfortunately, in feeble health and does not smoke, has gone to search for cigars for his friends in his private apartment. But even in this whispered exclamation, it is easily seen that each of the guests entertains a profound conviction of the truth of the same.

The ladies, who remain in the parlor after dinner, have really no idea of the charming freedom that characterizes the conversation of the gentlemen, who have retired to the smoking-room to discuss their cigars and coffee.

"Yes, yes,—she is a very fine woman!"

"I should say so!—an opulent beauty—opulent!"

"But the condition of this poor de K—— troubles me; do you know that he gets no better, doctor? Are you not uneasy?"

Every one smiles at the idea that this poor de K——, who is looking for cigars, grows visibly weaker, while his wife retains such excellent health.

"He is unreasonable: he works too assiduously! I have already told him so several times. And then, his political affairs! No, thank you, I never take sugar in my coffee."

"It is quite serious, you know; for really he is not strong!" ventures a guest, very gravely, at the same time biting his lips to keep from laughing.

"However, I find that the beauty of the person in question is much more striking this year than last," says a little gentleman, as he stirs his coffee.

"M. de K——'s beauty?—I don't think so!"

"I did not say that."

"Beg pardon! but I assure you that you did. Isn't it so, doctor?"

"Certainly! But let us distinguish, my friends!"

"Ah! ah! ah!" and the laugh is characteristic of persons whose digestive organs are in operation. The ice is broken, the chairs are drawn nearer together, and the conversation is continued in low tones.

"But it is her neck that is most remarkable; she turned her head, a few moments ago; it was sculptural, sculptural!"

"Her neck, her neck! And her hands, her arms, her shoulders! But did you see her at Léon's ball about two weeks ago? A queen, my dear Monsieur, a Roman empress! Don't you see—the neck, the shoulders, the arms—"

"Ah!" sighs somebody, as he gazes intently into his cup.

This calls forth much laughter, and the good de K—— arrives with a box of cigars of an exceptional brand.

"I beg you, my friends," says he, "to smoke these understandingly."

Hereupon, another burst of laughter, caused by the "Ah!" which no one has forgotten.

I have very often dined with my friend de K—— and have always, or nearly always, heard, after dinner, conversation similar to the above.

But I declare that the impertinence this evening, particularly shocked me, especially this "Ah!"—firstly, because de K—— is my friend, and, secondly, because I cannot tolerate persons who talk too much about their acquaintances. I—, well, I am the only man in Paris who can speak understandingly of Madame de K——. Yes, I—I dare say it! I repeat that I am the only one; and that can be easily explained: Paul and his brother are in England and Ernest is consul in America; as to Léon, he is at Hyères in his little sous-préfecture; therefore, you see that I am really the only one in Paris who—who—

"But what, M. Z——? Are you joking? Explain yourself!"

I am absurd! Just consider that I have said nothing. Let us change the conversation!

One fine spring morning, as the rain poured down in torrents and the north wind howled in fury, a young lady, more dead than alive—

Well, there is no escaping now! I had better confess the whole truth. But pledge me your honor that you will be discreet. Well, this is how it happened:

I am, I repeat it, the only man in Paris who can speak understandingly of Madame de K——.

Several years ago—don't let us hurry at all—I had an intimate friend, at whose house we were in the habit of holding our evening reunions. In summer, the window was always open; and there, by the glow of our cigars, we sat in our arm-chairs, discussing a thousand nothings. But, one evening, as we were speaking of pisciculture—every one of the details is firmly fixed in my mind—we heard the music of a powerful piano, and soon afterwards the firm notes of a voice which, I must acknowledge, was more energetic than harmonious.

"Hold! she must have changed her hours!" cried Paul, glancing at one of the windows of a house across the way.

"Who has changed her hours, my dear friend?"

"My neighbor, of course! Strong voice! What were you saying about those fish? She usually vocal-

ized in the morning, and that pleased me better, for I am in the habit of taking my walk at that time!"

Instinctively turning my eyes towards a brilliantly illuminated window, I perceived, through the Venetian blinds, a woman dressed in pure white; her long, loose hair, hanging in wavelets, was violently agitated, and, knowing that she was alone, she abandoned herself entirely to her inspiration.

"*Mon Fernaud, pars, va chercher la gloire oi-oi-oi-re!*" sang she, with a full voice. The song was not an over-pleasing one, but the songstress, as she sat there, interested me very much, indeed.

"Gentlemen," said I, "there seems to be, behind yon frail tissue—I allude to the blinds—a very beautiful lady. Suppose we lay aside our cigars; their glow might reveal our presence and trouble the songstress."

The cigars were immediately abandoned and the shutters almost entirely closed, in order to give greater security; then, we placed ourselves in a position of observation.

This was not, as I am well aware, an act of absolute politeness; but we were young, and, moreover, bachelors.

When the song was ended, the songstress arose. 'Twas a terribly warm night, and the lady's white robe was intended for a torrid temperature.

The lady approached her mirror, and it seemed to us that she contemplated her visage reflected therein, after which she raised her arms above her head, and by

this graceful movement her sleeves, which were unbuttoned, fell back to the shoulder, revealing to our gaze the distinct and beautiful outlines of her snowy arms.

"Heavens!" exclaimed Paul; but he could say no more.

The songstress then gathered up her long, flowing hair in her shapely hands and wrung it in the air, as is done in washing. Her head, the profile of which we could distinctly see, leaned slightly forward.

"A statue! a Venus!" murmured Paul.

"Be silent, will you!"

The lady then seated herself in a small and very low arm-chair, where she stretched out her limbs at ease; in this poetic position she remained for several moments, her arms raised and her hands clasped above her head. But why should I continue? These souvenirs trouble me, and, although their impression has never been erased—and never will be, I may add—I, nevertheless, experience an embarrassment in giving them in so detailed a manner. Moreover, at this point the light was extinguished.

Towards ten o'clock the next night, we were all at our friend Paul's!

Everything took place exactly as upon the previous evening: the songstress sat at the piano, vocalized and then proceeded slowly to her toilet. The same grace, the same charm.

Delightful souvenir of laughing youth!

Some time after the above-mentioned occurrence, I

heard of the marriage of my friend de K——, who, strange to relate, was joined in matrimony to the self-same beauty whom I knew so well!

"The adorable woman!" cried I, one day.

"You know her, then?"

"I?—no!—not the least in the world!"

"But then—"

"Yes—no—allow me! I—I saw her once at high mass!"

"She is not remarkably pretty, they say."

"No," I answered—and then, aside: "But what a statuesque figure!"

CHAPTER IV.

SOUVENIRS OF LENT—THE SERMON.

UPON the steps of the temple, the faithful jostle one another unmercifully; the toilets, already spring-like, glisten in the sun and sweep the dust with their long, floating skirts; feathers and ribbons wave to and fro; the bells toll piously; the carriages arrive at full trot, depositing upon the flag-stones all that the faubourg possesses of the most pious and noblest, and, returning, arrange themselves in a long line for the more advantageous display of their escutcheons.

Hurry, force your way through the crowd, if you wish to secure a good place, for the Abbé Gélon preaches, to-day, upon abstinence, and when the Abbé Gélon preaches it is as if Patti sang.

Enter, Madame; push open the heavy, triple folding-doors which close noiselessly behind you; touch quickly and lightly the holy-water brush which the pious old man presents to you, and make your graceful little sign of the cross, being careful the while not to soil your ribbons.

Do you hear those discreet, aristocratic whispers:

"How are you, my dear!"

"How are you, darling! Does he still intend to preach upon abstinence? Have you a good place?"

"Yes, yes; come with me. Is that your new hat?"

"Yes; do you like it? A little beauty, isn't it? Gracious, what a fearful crowd! Where is your husband?"

"A little beauty? Why, it's superb! My husband is in the warden's pew. He started before me. He is really becoming quite a fanatic; he will have nothing but radishes and lentils for dinner!"

"What a great consolation that must be for you!"

"Don't speak of it! Follow me. Look! there are Ernestine and Louise. What a nose poor Louise has! Who would ever believe that she drinks nothing but water!"

And these ladies advance with a little aristocratic air, overturning the chairs which impede their progress.

Once seated, they sink upon their praying-desks, cast a penetrating, adoring and tearful glance at the main altar, and hide their faces in their little, gloved hands.

For two minutes they are lost in graceful communion with the Saviour, after which they seat themselves again, coquettishly arranging the enormous bows of their bonnet-strings; and then, through their little golden eye-glasses, which they hold with a slight curve of the little finger, they critically inspect the congregation, and, while rustling the satin folds of skirts the amplitude of which renders them difficult to hold, they distribute, right and left, adorable little recognitions and delicious little smiles.

"Are you well, darling?'

"Yes, thank you. Do you see Louise and Madame de C—— down there, between the two candles? How can they attend service dressed in such gaudy style?"

"Oh! I never have had much confidence in Madame de C——'s piety. Have you heard the story they tell of her—the story of the folding-screen? I will tell you all about it some day. Ah! there's the beadle."

The beadle, with his long, silver chain and his bald, polished head, appears in the pulpit. He prepares the desk, arranges the little white cushion, and then disappears, giving place to the Abbé Gélon, who, although pale from having fasted, is, nevertheless, characterized by his usual dignity, elegance and earnestness. For a moment, there is a visible agitation in the flock of the faithful, and then all are seated, more or less comfortably, as the case may be. A profound silence reigns, and all the piously avaricious eyes are fixed upon the orator. The little Abbé is calm and dignified, and in his eyes one divines a corner of heaven towards which they are turned. His beautiful, white hands, encircled by cuffs of fine lace, rest negligently upon the red velvet of the desk. He waits several minutes, coughs twice, unfolds his handkerchief, places his square hat in a corner, and, leaning forward, lets fall from his lips, in a sweet, low, persuasive, adorable voice, the first word of his sermon:

"Ladies."

He has pronounced but that one word, and yet he

has already gained the affection of every heart. His eyes wander slowly over the faithful, and his glance is velvety, penetrating and attractive; afterwards he pronounces several words of Latin, which he has the good sense to translate very quickly into French, adding: "What is abstinence, why practise abstinence, and how practise abstinence? These, ladies, are the three points in question." He wipes his lips, clears his throat and coughs: a holy trembling seizes on every soul. "What will he say? Splendid subject! Listen!"

"Is it not true, Madame, that your heart is piously moved, and that, at this instant, you feel a sincere thirst for abstinence and mortification?"

The holy spot is bathed in a soft obscurity, sufficiently resembling that of your boudoir, and inviting revery.

I know not what, but an ineffable and vaguely infatuating something penetrates your soul. The voice of this handsome and reverend old man, raised in this prevailing silence, sounds heavenly. In the deep, solitary vaults of the temple mysterious echoes repeat his every word, and, in the shadow of the sanctuary, the great golden candlesticks gleam out through the darkness with the lustre of precious stones. The old windows, stained with symbolical designs, are suddenly illumined and floods of sunbeams shoot across the stone arches like swords of fire! Is it heaven that opens? Is it the Holy Spirit descending from on high?

And, wrapped in a pious, charming revery, you regard ecstatically the fantastical sculptures, which are finally lost in the great arches and strangely carved pipes of the hundred-voiced organ. And in your soul all those piously cultivated beliefs of childhood are revived in a moment. A vague perfume of incense still lingers in the air. The great stone pillars tower to infinite heights, and from celestial regions descends the golden lamp, swinging and shedding its eternal light upon the perfumed air.

The suavity of the orator's tones becomes more and more pronounced. The sense of his words is lost, and, lulled by the holy voice, like an infant sinking to sleep upon the bosom of God, your eyelids close.

You do not sleep, but your head bows, you are surrounded by an immensity of blue, and your soul, enamoured of the vague, springs into celestial space and is lost in infinity.

Sweet, holy sensation—delicious, infatuating ecstasy! And yet some speak mockingly of this religious display, of these pomps and splendors and of this celestial music that relaxes the nerves and carries the mind into the regions of dreamland. Let us pity these scornful mockers, who know nothing of the ecstasy of those to whom are opened the gates of Paradise, and who, at will, may pass those pearly gates and walk in the throng of the angels of God!

But why speak of these scorners and of their impotent mockery? As the Abbé Gélon says: "The

soul is a fortress continually besieged by the spirit of darkness!"

The mere idea of this constant struggle with this powerful spirit increases our power a hundred-fold, and sufficiently flatters our vanity.

But hush! The Abbé Gélon terminates his sermon; he is fatigued and his voice trembles. His right hand traces in the air the sign of peace. Then he wipes the perspiration from his brow, his brilliant eyes sparkle with a divine light, he descends the little staircase, and throughout the temple resound the regular strokes of the beadle's staff, as he conducts the little Abbé to the sacristy.

"Was he not charming, darling?"

"Adorable! and when he said: 'May my eyes close forever if—' You recollect?"

"Superb! And then when he uttered: 'Yes, ladies, you are coquettes!' He has said some very severe things to us! He speaks beautifully though!"

"Admirably! He is divine!"

CHAPTER V.

SOUVENIRS OF LENT—THE PENITENTS.

'TIS four o'clock; the church is plunged in silence and darkness. The confused rumbling of the distant carriages hardly reaches the house of prayer, and the creaking of a boot is the only human sound that troubles the great calm of the temple.

However, on advancing, you perceive, here and there, in the little chapels, groups of the faithful, kneeling, motionless and silent. Their faces are expressive of deep despair and fill the heart with sadness and inquietude. Is it a gathering of the condemned?

The aspect of one of these chapels is somewhat peculiar. About one hundred and fifty ladies, lost in garments of silk and velvet, are piously ranged about a confessional. A sweet odor of violet and vervain fills the air, and, in spite of yourself, you stop a moment before this confusion of elegance and taste.

From each side of the confessional flow the refractory folds of a skirt, for, on account of the smallness of the little cells, the penitent has not been able to enter more than half-way; and you perceive, in the shadow, the movements of her head, and divine, by the swaying of her long, white feather, that she has bowed her head beneath the remonstrance of the Abbé and the repentance of her soul.

She has hardly terminated her little story of woe, when six or seven of her neighbors precipitate themselves one upon the other in their struggles to secure the vacant place. This eagerness is easily explained, for this is the confessional of the Abbé Gélon, and, when the Abbé Gélon confesses, it is precisely as if he preached: there is an immense crowd.

He directs all these ladies, the good Abbé, and remains with an angelical devotion for hours in this narrow, little box, devoid of light and air, at the sides of which continually whisper two eternal penitents.

The good Abbé! What renders him all the more adorable is that he does not detain you too long. He knows how to dispense with useless details. He perceives the condition of the soul with so much keenness and with such a sure eye that he spares you a thousand embarrassments, and being, moreover, a sensible person, as well as a man of the world, he almost renders the confession of these petty faults, half of which he has suggested himself, agreeable!

You approach the Abbé somewhat embarrassed by the weight of your packet of sins, and, while you hesitate where to begin, he unties all the knots with a discreet and skilful hand, examines the contents rapidly and smilingly consoles you. The confession is made before you have had a chance to pronounce a single word, and all this in such a manner that you exclaim, in prostrating yourself before God:

"I was pure, pure as the lily, and yet I was alarmed!"

And even when in his sacerdotal robes he becomes more than man, and speaks in the name of God, the sound of his voice and the keenness of his glance betray a native distinction and reveal a courtesy which certainly could not detract from the excellence of any clergyman.

If God desires that there be a Faubourg Saint-Germain in this world — and who will deny that he does?—is it not just that he give us a minister capable of speaking as we speak and of comprehending our ideas of delicacy? That is self-evident, and, really, I cannot understand certain ladies who speak continually of the Abbé Brice; not that I wish to detract from the merits of this good Abbé; this is neither the time nor the place for calumny. He is a holy man, but his holiness is of a somewhat vulgar kind and requires much polishing.

You must dot your *i*'s for the Abbé Brice; he understands badly, or he does not understand at all. Confess a little sin to him, and he knits his brow; he must know the hour, the minute, the circumstances and the causes; he examines it, turns it over and over, weighs it, and ends with a thousand questions and by being indiscreet. Is there not, even in the holy mission of the minister, a manner of being politely severe and of remaining a gentleman among well-bred people?

The Abbé Brice has a decidedly plebeian air—why should I not say it?—and that ruins him. Then, again, he is rather republican in his tastes! His shoes never

fit at all, and his nails are deplorable! When he wears gloves — twice a year — his hands are stiff and his fingers extended!

I do not deny that he possesses admirable virtues, you understand; but, do what you may, you will never be able to induce a society woman to confess her little sins to the son of her dairyman and say: "My father!"

Of course, it is unnecessary to be absurdly fastidious in this respect. But this excellent Abbé Brice smells so strongly of snuff! All sorts of people confess to him, and you will agree with me in this, that it is detestable to find your waiting-maid or your cook in the same confessional with yourself.

No one, dear Madame, understands Christian humility better than you do; but, then, you are not used to riding in the omnibus, nor do you care to contract the habit. They say that in heaven you will be only too happy to call your coachman brother and Rosalie sister, but these good people shall have passed through purgatory long before that, and fire purifies everything, you know. But who will dare to assure me that Rosalie will never see heaven, since you yourself, dear Madame, are not sure of being accepted?

Therefore, you can easily understand why the Abbé Gélon's chapel is always full to overflowing; and, if people whisper a little, it is only because they have been waiting three whole hours and because they all know each other.

In fact, all these ladies are there.

"Please make a little room for me, my dear," whispers a lady who has just arrived, as she makes her way through a confusion of skirts, praying-desks and chairs.

"Ah! you here, my dear friend! Come over here! Clementine and Madame de B—— are there in the corner. You will have to wait two whole hours!"

"I am not at all astonished, if Madame de B—— is here; she is inexhaustible, and I know of no woman who—tells the truth slower! Are all these ladies still waiting? Ah! there is Ernestine. (She salutes her with a discreet little wave of the hand.) She is an angel, the dear child! She confessed to me the other day that her conscience was sorely troubled because she could not force herself to embrace the mat at the Passion hour!"

"Ah! charming! But, tell me, did you embrace it?"

"*I?* No, indeed! It was very dirty, my dear!"

"But does your conscience not condemn you, darling?"

"Oh! I confess all these little things in a body. I simply say: 'My father, I have had human respect.' I give the sum total."

"Precisely! So do I, and this good Abbé Gélon gives an acquittal."

"Well, seriously, he would not have time to do otherwise, even if he desired. But I fear that we are chatting too long, darling. Permit me to contemplate my sins."

Madame sinks upon her praying-desk. Without turning her eyes from the altar, she removes her glove from her right hand and turns her Sainte-Geneviève ring, which serves her as a chaplet. Then, her eyes cast down and her lips compressed, she opens her prayer-book, the clasp of which is adorned with a fleur-de-lis, and seeks therein those prayers suitable to her condition.

"Ah! Madame de P—— has finished at last; she is as red as a turkey cock!"

Four ladies rush, with pious precipitation, to replace her.

"Ah! Madame, please do not push me in that manner!"

"But, Madame, I was here before you!"

"I beg your pardon, Madame, but—"

"You have a singular idea of the respect due the house of prayer!"

"Hist! hist! Take advantage of the opportunity, Madame; make your way through and get the vacant place! (Whispers) Do not forget the big sin of yesterday, or the two little ones of this morning!"

CHAPTER VI.

SOUVENIRS OF LENT—A FIRESIDE CHAT.

MADAME (waving her little hand in the air). It is quilled, quilled, quilled! The sweetest quilling! And it is trimmed all around with the loveliest light colors!

Her Friend. There's some style about it, my dear.

Madame. Yes; it will be very attractive, I'm sure; and then, over this moss, this snow, fall the long blue silk ruffles, which match the body. But such a blue! It is charming! It is somewhat deeper than sky-blue. My husband calls it a discreet blue.

Her Friend. Ah! charming! Your husband is full of jokes.

Madame. Of course. You understand immediately: discreet blue! That gives an idea.

Her Friend. Speaking of his jokes, do you know that Ernestine has never forgiven him for his pleasantry of the other evening?

Madame. What pleasantry? Do you mean the other evening when the Abbé Gélon and the Abbé Brice were present?

Her Friend. And his son, who had just arrived.

Madame. What! the Abbé Brice's son? (At this both burst out laughing).

Her Friend. Ah! ah! ah! what are you saying. Ah! ah! how cruel in you!

Madame. I said the Abbé Brice, and you added: "and his son!" It's your fault, darling. The cherub ought to be a choir boy! (Both ladies indulge in hearty laughter.)

Her Friend. (Placing her hand upon Madame's mouth.) But hush! hush! it's sinful!—and in Lent! —Oh!

Madame. Whose son were you speaking of, then?

Her Friend. Ernestine and Albert's, of course! A perfect flower of innocence! He heard your husband's pleasantry, and his mother was sorely vexed.

Madame. I don't understand you, my dear; tell me all about it.

Her Friend. Well, on entering the parlor and seeing the two candelabra lighted, and the two Abbés, who happened to be between the lights at that moment, he seemed to be looking for something. "What are you seeking?" asked Ernestine. "I am looking for the holy-water font," said he, aloud; "pardon me, dear neighbor, for having arrived in the middle of the service!"

Madame. Is it possible? (Laughing.) Well, the fact is he never has good luck; that is the second time he has met those gentlemen at Ernestine's. Her parlor must be a sacristy!

Her Friend. (Rather dryly.) A sacristy, my dear! How free-thinking you have become since your marriage!

Madame. Become? I never did care to meet the priests anywhere but in church.

Her Friend. You are a child, but a thoughtful one, my dear! What! you do not care to meet the Abbé Gélon?

Madame. Ah! the Abbé Gélon; that's another thing! He is so charming!

Her Friend. (Quickly.) And so elegant, isn't he?

Madame. And so venerable! How beautifully his white hair falls about his pale, earnest face!

Her Friend. Oh! he is earnestness itself! And his glance, his sweet, tender glance! The other day he spoke of meditation, and he was simply divine! Once he was forced to pause and dry his tears; he was no longer master of his emotion; he grew calm almost immediately, however; he exercises so much self-restraint; he continued, calmly, 'tis true, but then we were deeply moved in our turn. It was electric! The Comtesse de S——, who sat near me, wept like a fountain under her yellow bonnet!

Madame. Ah! yes; I have seen her yellow bonnet! What a bunch of a thing this Madame de S—— is!

Her Friend. Well, the fact is she is always a perfect jumble! By the bye, do you know that they have offered the bishopric? A fact! I have it on good authority. My husband was told by the gentlemen themselves.

Madame. (Interrupting her.) They offered Madame le S—— a bishopric? They did wrong!

Her Friend. You jeer at everything, my dear. There are, however, some subjects worthy of respect. I meant to say that they have offered the Abbé Gélon the mitre and the staff; but he has declined to accept. The shepherd's staff would not be amiss in his hand, nevertheless.

Madame. Oh! as far as that is concerned, he has a most charming hand.

Her Friend. And it is so white, so shapely and so aristocratic. We do wrong, perhaps, in dwelling upon these worldly details; but really he has such a beautiful hand! (with enthusiasm.) My experience is that the Abbé Gélon makes one love religion! Do you attend his lectures?

Madame. I was at the first. I wished to attend on Thursday, but Madame Savain came to try on my new dress; I was an eternity discussing the biasses and the ruffles.

Her Friend. Oh! the ruffles are cut bias?

Madame. Yes, yes, and have a whole host of little cross-bars; the idea is my own. I have never seen its like anywhere; I am sure it will be highly attractive!

Her Friend. Madame Savain told me that you have dispensed with the shoulder-pieces.

Madame. Oh! the tattler! Yes; I wish but a ribbon, a mere nothing, on the shoulder—something to which I can attach a trinket. I was a little afraid that the body might be too plain. Madame Savain had placed a few ridiculous gewgaws upon the front; and,

while I was about it, I wished to try my eternal cross-bars, you know. So I was prevented from going to the good Abbé Gélon's lecture. They say he was admirable!

Her Friend. Oh! superb! He spoke of realistic books; there was a terrible crowd. He completely annihilated all those horrors of M. Zola. What a monster that man must be!

Madame. Have you read the books "Nana" and "Nana's Daughter"?

Her Friend. God forbid! But they must be very powerful works, since the Abbé Gélon, in speaking to one of my husband's friends, pronounced them—

Madame. Well, what?

Her Friend. I dare not tell you, for, if it be really true, it is terrible. He said they were (whispers) diabolical! It is confounding, is it not? And they sell his photographs; he has a diabolical air. (Looking at the clock.) Half-past two! Oh! I have not given orders for dinner yet! These three days of fasting in each week have reduced me to a state of martyrdom. I must vary the food a little—my husband is very hard to please. I really should lose my mind if we could get no fish. How do you manage it, my dear?

Madame. Oh! it's very simple: provided that I do not prohibit him from eating what he likes, he is contented with everything.

Her Friend. But I think we should subject our-

selves to some privations in this life. Your system is too accommodating! I hope, at least, that you have a dispensation!

Madame. Yes; I have everything in order.

Her Friend. As to myself, I have permission to eat butter and eggs, in consideration of my position as sub-chancellor of the Association. The Abbé Gélon pressed me to accept a full dispensation on account of my headaches, but I refused. Oh! I refused positively! Should one make a compromise with one's principles? If so, there are many persons who have no principles whatever.

Madame. If you say that in reference to my husband, you are wrong. Auguste is by no means a pagan. He has the making of a good Christian in him.

Her Friend. The making! Horrors! my blood boils! But I must go! Well, I shall expect you on Tuesday; he intends to lecture upon authority—a superb subject; several allusions are expected. Oh! I forgot to tell you that I take up the collection and shall await your offering, darling. I collect the widows' farthings. Some one has suggested to me the idea of collecting with my little daughter upon my praying-desk. Madame de K—— collected last Sunday at St. Thomas', and her baby held the purse.

Madame. I shall certainly be there. What do you intend to wear?

Her Friend. Oh! plain black!

Madame. And you are so charming in black!

Her Friend. It is all for the best; I do not look so badly in black. Don't forget Tuesday, and try to induce your husband to come; he is so fond of music!

Madame. I can't promise you that.

Her Friend. The gentlemen are all alike; they play the rôle of the strong-minded, but, when they are finally touched by grace, they look back upon their past with horror! When my husband speaks of his youth, tears stream from his eyes. You know he has not always been what he now is: his youth was extremely agitated, the poor darling! I rather like a man to know something of life,—don't you? But what a chatterbox I am, and how the time is flying! I have still to visit Madame W——. I wonder if she has found her young man?

Madame. What, in heaven's name, is she going to do with him?

Her Friend. Oh! he is a young actor for her soirée. She is going to give a performance at her house—comedy, you know. For a pious purpose, of course—in Lent! It is simply for the benefit of the Association. But I really must go! Good-bye, my dear!

Madame. Tuesday, then, darling—and in grand style, eh?

Her Friend. In grand style. Remember me to your lost one! Adieu! adieu!

CHAPTER VII.

SOUVENIRS OF LENT—A DREAM.

TROUBLED sleep is nearly always the result of bad digestion. My friend, Dr. Jacques, will certify to this statement.

Now, the other night, 'twas last Friday, I committed the indiscretion of eating some brill, a positively unaccommodating fish.

May heaven permit that a singular dream, the consequence of the above, inspire you with prudent reflections.

But, whatever may be the result, here is the dream in all its strangeness:

In my dream I had the honor of belonging, as first vicar, to one of the most frequented parishes of Paris—an unheard-of absurdity! I was possessed, moreover, of a certain stoutness, a venerable head encircled by numerous threads of silver, very delicate and shapely hands, a slightly aquiline nose, great earnestness, the friendship of the ladies and the esteem of M. le Curé.

Once, as I was in the sacristy, performing various pious services and untying the knots of my alb, I was accosted by M. le Curé. I can see him still—he was using his handkerchief.

"My dear friend," he said, "you confess, this evening, do you not?"

"Most assuredly. Are you well, this morning? There were many people at my mass."

While saying this I finished my pious services; I placed my alb in the closet, and offering M. le Curé a pinch of snuff:

"This is not breaking fast," said I, gayly.

"Ah!—ah!—ah!—no! no! It is five minutes to twelve, and the clock is slow."

We took another pinch and departed, arm in arm, through the little door leading to the apartment of the night sacraments, chatting amicably as we went.

Suddenly I found myself transported to my confessional. The chapel was full of ladies, all of whom bowed as I approached. I entered my narrow tribunal, the key of which I had in my pocket. I then deposited upon the bench my air-cushion, which had become indispensable to me on the eve of great fêtes, on account of having to sit so long. Over my cassock I placed my snow white surplice, and, after having meditated awhile, I opened the little window which placed me in direct communication with my penitents.

I shall not attempt to describe, one by one, the different persons who knelt at my side. Nor shall I tell you that a certain lady, dressed in deep black, with a Grecian nose, thin lips and a yellowish visage, after having said her Confiteor in Latin, and without the least hesitation, touched me infinitely by her most

absolute confidence. In ten minutes she had found an opportunity to make me thoroughly acquainted with her sister-in-law, her brother, her uncle who was at the point of death and whose fortune she was to inherit, her nephews and her domestics. Moreover, I understood, notwithstanding the touching benevolence which characterized her every word, that she was the victim of every one of those whom she had mentioned. She concluded by telling me that she had a son about to be married and that his state of health would not permit of fasting.

I can still see an immense throng of other penitents, the recital of whose virtues and eccentricities would be, perhaps, too wearisome. I shall, therefore, with your permission, speak only of the last two, who, by the bye, made a particularly strong impression upon my mind.

The first was a little lady adorned with feathers, who suddenly precipitated herself into the confessional; she was vivacious, sharp and rosy. Despite her expression of profound meditation, she spoke rapidly and with a flute-like voice, repeating her Confiteor in a manner rather inconsistent with common-sense.

"My father," said she, "I am deeply troubled."

"Speak, my child; you know that a confessor is a father."

"But, my father, I really dare not."

There are many of these timid little hearts that need encouragement.

"Courage, my child," said I; "speak!"

"My husband," murmured she, confusedly, "does not wish to fast during Lent. Should I force him to do so, my father?"

"Yes; force him by persuasion, my child."

"But he says he will take his meals at the restaurant unless there is meat on the table. Oh! how this makes me suffer! Could I not assume all the responsibility myself, my father?"

This little wife was really very interesting; in the centre of her cheek and near the corner of her mouth, she had placed a tiny beauty-spot, very worldly, it is true, but charming in the profane acceptation of the word, and giving a particularly sweet expression to her face. Her beautiful little white teeth shone like pearls when she opened her mouth to speak of her troubles; moreover, her garments emitted a perfume almost as soft as that of our altars, although of a different nature, and I inhaled this sweet odor with a scrupulous uneasiness which, nevertheless, inclined me to be indulgent. I was so near her that not a single one of the details of her features escaped my observation; I distinguished, almost in spite of myself, a slight shivering of her left eyebrow, which agitated, at almost every moment, a refractory lock of her long, golden hair.

"Your position is a delicate one," said I; "on the one side, your domestic happiness, and, on the other, your Christian duty." She sighed deeply. "Well,

my dear child, my age permits me to speak to you thus, does it not?"

"Oh! yes, yes, my father."

"Well, then, my dear child—" At this moment I perceived or seemed to perceive, at the outer corner of her eyes, two little bistre-colored marks in the shape of arrow-heads. "Endeavor, my child, to convince your husband, who, in reality—" And, then, her long, curved eyelashes were underlined, if I may so express it, by a dark ridge, widening delicately towards the centre of the eye. This physical peculiarity seemed to me to be rather the result of premeditated coquetry than the gift of nature. And yet, strange to say, the discovery of this weakness of this candid little heart only augmented my compassion. I continued, in a low, tender voice:

"Strive, my dear child, to lead your husband back to the ways of the Lord. Fasting is not only a religious but also a sanitary usage. Have you done all in your power to convince your husband?"

"Yes, my father, absolutely all."

"Be precise, my child; I should know the details."

"Well, my father, I have tried gentleness and tenderness."

What a miserable wretch this husband must be, thought I.

"I have begged him in the name of our babe," continued the little angel, "to desist, lest he endanger my salvation as well as his own. Once or twice, I

have even asserted that the spinage was cooked in fat, when such was not the case. Did I do wrong, my father?"

"There are pious misrepresentations which our holy church excuses, for she only considers the intention and the glory of God; I cannot, therefore, say that you have done wrong. You have not, I suppose, subjected your husband to any of those excusable fits of anger which may escape from any Christian soul in the struggle with the spirit of error? It is really unnatural for an upright man to oppose the mandates of the church. Make him a few concessions."

(With contrition.) "I have made concessions, my father—and I fear only too often!"

"Do not be alarmed, my dear child."

"I assure you, my father, that my intentions have ever been in conformity with your counsels; but his, my father, those of my husband, am I responsible for them? Oh! that's what troubles me!"

"I understand your scruples, my child, but do not be unreasonably alarmed. Does your husband communicate his intentions to you?"

"No, my father."

"Well, then, my dear child, you are by no means responsible for the consequences, if you accept your position of victim with resignation and regret. Do you accept it thus, my child?"

(Casting down her eyes.) "Yes, my father; I accept it with — with a sweet resignation — most of the time."

"And the rest of the time?" I was deeply moved by so much candor.

"The rest of the time I submit also, but as a recognition of his kindness, for my husband is very kind, my father, and it is that which causes me to suffer all the more to see him wander from the narrow road. Sometimes, I think that I should not love him so deeply, so sincerely, for one should love God above all, is it not so, my father?"

"Yes, my child, the church should be first in the consideration of every one."

"I know it, my father; but, then, my husband unites with his great kindness so communicative a gayety, and has such a graceful and natural way of excusing his impiety that I laugh in spite of myself, when I should weep. It seems to me that he raises a veil between myself and my duty, and that all my scruples vanish under the charm of his presence and wit. My husband has much wit," she added, with an almost imperceptible little smile, through which gleamed a shadow of pride.

"Hum—hum— (The atrocity of this man revolted me.) There is no form which the tempter cannot assume at will, my child. Wit itself is by no means to be condemned, although the church avoids it as being a worldly garb; but it may become dangerous and should be looked upon as a veritable pest when it tends to the overthrow of the church and faith. Faith is to the soul, I need not remind you, what

the velvet surface is to the peach, and, if I may so express myself, what the dew is to the flower. Continue, my child."

"But, my father, when my husband has diverted me for an instant, I repent immediately; and he has hardly closed the door before I am on my knees praying for his salvation."

"Quite right—quite right!"

(More bravely, but still timidly.) "I—I have sewed a little holy relic in the lining of his coat."

"And have you noticed the result?"

(With embarrassment.) "For certain things, my father, it has been efficient, perhaps; but for fasting it has not done anything."

"Do not be discouraged. We are now in the holy time of Lent; well, continue to employ pious subterfuges; order his food to be cooked without the use of fat, but be careful to have it very agreeable to the taste."

"Yes, my father; I thought of that. Day before yesterday I ordered one of those salmon steaks, and oh! it looked so much like ham!"

(With a slight smile.) "Yes, yes; I have seen them. Well!"

"Well, he ate the salmon, but ordered a mutton chop immediately afterwards!"

"Deplorable!" cried I, almost in spite of myself, so excessive did the insensibility of this man's heart seem to me. "Patience, my child; let the sufferings caused

by the impiety of your husband be your offering to heaven, and remember that they will be credited to you in the end. Have you anything further to tell me!"

"No, my father."

"Bow down, then, and receive my absolution." And the dear soul sighed deeply as she joined her two little hands.

* * * * * * *

Hardly had my penitent arisen to retire, when I closed the window abruptly and took a long pinch of snuff. We of the church know full well how a pinch calms the spirit. Then, after having thanked God rather rapidly, I took out my large, old-fashioned watch, the jovial face of which informed me that it was not as late as I had supposed. The dim light of the temple had deceived me, and my stomach had in nowise contradicted the error. I was hungry. I banished, however, such thoughts from my mind, and, having shaken several grains of snuff from my neck-band, I loosened my braces which pinched me a little at the shoulder and then opened the window.

"Madame, please be a little careful," cried my penitent to the left, addressing a lady of whom I could see nothing but her bonnet-strings; "please be a little careful!—such a thing is really unheard of!"

The tone of my penitent, which was exceedingly irritated, although restrained by respect for the place, moderated as if by enchantment upon the opening of my window. She knelt, piously crossed her two little

gloveless, perfumed, dimpled and rosy hands, the shapely, white fingers of which were loaded with rings. I thought I recognized the hands as those of the Comtesse de B——, a soul appertaining to the élite, and whom I often had the honor of visiting, especially on Saturdays, when an extra plate was always placed upon the table.

The lady raised her little lace veil, and I discovered that I had not been mistaken. It was the Comtesse. She smiled upon me as upon an acquaintance, but with an admirable propriety which seemed to say:

"How are you, my dear Abbé? I shall not inquire closely as to the condition of your health, for at this moment you are clothed in sacred robes, but I am interested in your rheumatism, nevertheless!"

'Twas an irreproachable little smile, and I replied by as near an imitation of it as possible, yet I gave her to understand by the expression of my countenance that I was making a very great concession in her favor. I murmured: "You are well, my dear Madame?"

"Yes, thank you, my father. (Her voice was angelic.) But I have just been very angry."

"And why angry? Perhaps, you are mistaken, and 'twas but a moment of ill humor." We must not frighten the penitent, you know.

"Oh! not at all, my father; it was real anger. My dress has just been terribly torn, and really it is very strange that one should be exposed to such inconveniences on approaching the tribunal of—"

"Bow down, my dear Madame, bow down." And, assuming a very grave air, I gave her my benediction.

I saw plainly that the Comtesse's spirit, agitated by her recent mishap, sought vainly to compose itself. By a strange phenemenon of lucidity, I beheld not only the inmost struggles of her soul, but each one of her thoughts. The stronger her efforts to restrain her imagination, the more insatiable it became. "I have made a serious examination of my conscience," said she to herself. "Not more than ten minutes ago, on alighting from my carriage, I counted three sins, and there was one, especially, which troubled me sorely! How these little faults escape one's memory! I must have left them in the carriage!" And she could not help smiling at the idea of these three little sins hiding themselves in the soft cushions. "And the poor Abbé is waiting so patiently in his narrow little box! How warm it must be in there! His face is so red! Heavens! where shall I commence? But I certainly cannot invent sins. It is my torn dress that distracts me. And poor Louise is waiting for me at the dressmaker's. Oh! I cannot recollect them! Oh! I am sure Louise will wait until at least five o'clock. Moreover, the bodice fits splendidly and there is nothing to try on except the skirt. And just to think that I had three to confess only ten minutes ago!"

All these different thoughts struggled so desperately in the mind of the Comtesse, that I had not the heart to refuse her my assistance.

"Let us see," said I, with a paternal smile and a benevolent voice, as I twirled my snuff-box in my fingers, "let us see, my dear Madame. Speak without fear. Have you no twitches of conscience whatever? Have you not, at certain moments, been guilty of worldly coquetry, of a certain desire to surpass the attractions of your neighbor?"

I had a vague idea that she would acknowledge these things.

"Yes, my father," said she, smoothing out her bonnet-strings, "yes, several times; but I have always endeavored to banish such thoughts."

"This good intention partly excuses you; but reflect, my dear Madame; consider how vain these little triumphs of vanity are, how unworthy of a pure soul, and how many impediments they oppose to its salvation. Continue, my dear Madame."

"My father, it has been impossible for me to resist certain temptations to gormandize."

"Again, again! Consider, my child, consider! You are now at the tribunal of penitence. Promise me to struggle energetically against these little temptations, which of themselves are really not great sins, but being continually repeated, as in your case, they prove a persistent attachment to those transient, worldly pleasures, so displeasing in the eyes of the church. Has this gormandizing manifested itself by acts of more than usual extravagance, or is the fault simply as it was last month?"

"Exactly as it was last month, my father."

"Yes, yes; still those little delicacies between meals." And I sighed, gravely.

"Yes, my father; and nearly always a glass of Capri or Syracuse follows them."

"A glass of Syracuse follows them, does it? Continue, continue, my dear Madame."

The mention of these choice wines and delicacies gave rise within my soul to distractions for which I demanded pardon.

"Do you recollect any other fault, my child?" asked I, passing my hand across my brow.

"No, my father; I can recollect no other," sighed the Comtesse.

"Well, then, Madame, give birth in your heart to sincere repentance for those sins which you have confessed and for those which you have forgotten; consider, Madame, and humiliate yourself. Receive my absolution and depart in peace."

The Comtesse arose, smiling the while with discreet politeness, and then said, in her usual voice, but very low:

"I shall see you on Saturday evening, shall I not?"

I bowed my head in token of assent; but I was rather embarrassed by my sacred character.

I have already stated that in this strange dream I possessed the gift of reading the inmost thoughts of my penitents, so that I was well aware of what the Comtesse did and thought after she had left the confessional.

She returned to her praying-desk, where, in all the sincerity of her little heart, she prostrated herself, fervently and rapidly asking grace. She felt a great weight lifted from her soul as she knelt there, and, had it not been for her tiny watch, which told her so plainly that poor Louise was waiting for her at the dress-maker's, she would have remained much longer in contemplation and repentance, for, as she knelt, the little Comtesse felt justly proud, in the purity of her soul.

It was already late: she hurried into her pockets various little articles which she had used in her acts of worship, and, particularly, a coquettish little book with a golden clasp; then, arranging her gloves, she made a rapid and graceful sign of the cross, and vanished, pure, light and joyous. Her tiny heels resounded paf! paf! over the grand old flag-stones, and she seemed to take pleasure in this little noise which the pious echoes repeated, for she said to herself:

"Hear me walk, sacred echoes of the temple, for I am as pure as yourselves; oh! what happiness to feel one's self an angel; and oh! how little it costs!"

Her carriage awaited her at the door. She made a little sign with her hand, her horses advanced with a neigh of recognition and her footman opened the door.

"Drive to the Rue de la Paix."

"Will Madame stop at the baker's?" ventured the footman.

"Hum!" said she, her eyes fixed intently upon her

glove. Then, suddenly, in a voice resolute and not devoid of pride: "No, no; stop nowhere."

At this moment, my ears were saluted by a loud noise, and, opening my eyes, I perceived Jean, who was lighting the fire. For an instant, my mind struggled between the dream and the reality, and 'twas not without a sigh that I tore myself from the influence of this strange nightmare.

"What time is it, Jean?" I asked, stretching my arms.

"Half-past ten. What will Monsieur have for breakfast?"

"Nothing—a cup of tea."

I still felt a weight upon my stomach.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AMBASSADOR'S BALL.

"I REALLY cannot assert that it does not render one attractive," continued my aunt, as she touched the andiron with the tip of her little boot. "Of course, it lends a particular charm to the glance of the eye, I must admit that. A mere dash of powder is excellent and a slight tinge of rouge admirable; and, then, that well-nigh imperceptible little streak of blue which they so deftly apply under the eye—I wonder how they do it? Goodness! but some women are coquettes! Did you notice Anna's eyes, last Thursday, at Madame de Sieurac's? Is such a thing allowable? Can you understand how people dare to do it?"

"I cannot say, aunt, that I detest eyes of that kind. They are so velvety!"

"I shall not dispute that: they are velvety!"

"And, at the same time, what a strange, soft brilliancy they possess, and, oh! such an expression of delicious languor!"

"Most assuredly; but, then, it seems so like placarding one's self. If it were not for that, I should not mind it so much. But it is attractive—sometimes! In my walks in the Bois I have met many adorable

creatures—so adorable in their red, their black and their blue; for they also use blue, the coquettes!"

"Yes, aunt; Polish blue. It is for the veins, you know."

(With interest.) "They imitate the veins, do they? Upon my word, it is infamous! But you seem to be very well informed!"

"Oh! I have so often taken part in society comedies; I even have quite a collection of all those articles at home: little pots, lip-salves, beauty-spots, blue for the veins, etc., etc."

"Ah! you have all those things, have you, you wicked fellow? Tell me, are you going to the Ambassador's ball, to-morrow evening?"

"Yes, dear aunt. You intend to wear a character costume, do you not?"

"Oh! I suppose I must, in order to be like the rest. Moreover, they say it will be magnificent. (After a pause.) Do you think I ought to powder?"

"Of course, aunt, in order to be like the rest! And you will be adorable, I am sure!"

"Well, we'll see, little courtier." She arose, offered me her hand to kiss and made a movement to depart; then, turning again: "By the bye, Ernest, since you intend to go to the Ambassador's to-morrow evening, you had better call for me. I offer you a place in my carriage. You can tell me how you like my costume—and—and—." She laughed heartily as she bent to my ear and whispered: "Can't you bring those little pots

of yours along? Come early, if you do! It is sub rosa, you know!" And she placed her finger upon her lips to indicate that silence must be maintained upon the subject. "To-morrow, Ernest, and don't forget to come early!"

My aunt, as you may readily perceive from the above conversation, has by no means said farewell to youth and its charms—and she is right. She has basked in the sunbeams of more than twenty summers, if the little addition I have just made is correct; but, then, I am so poor a mathematician that I should never dare to vouch for the correctness of this calculation. And why should I? Is she not always received with a murmur of genuine admiration on entering a ball-room with her superb air of a crowned empress? Do not all the passers-by, be they who they may, turn and look back when, from the window of her carriage, she gives directions to her coachman? And does not her voice still ring with the silver tones of youth, and are not her gestures yet characterized by the delicate, charming grace of a woman of twenty summers? Is she not, finally, this good, dear little aunt, in the full bloom of beauty, conscious of her perfection and sure of admiration and triumph?

* * * * * * *

The next evening, my aunt's dressing-room was a spectacle of the most perfect disorder. From all the half-open drawers peeped, in wild confusion, laces, embroideries, trinkets—in fact, all the component parts

of the paraphernalia of a boudoir. On the table lay half-open jewel-cases, papers of pins, brushes and combs. Ends of ribbons and thread, pieces of satin and silk, and leaves of crushed flowers were scattered over the carpet, to which a light covering of powder had given a dusty, whitish appearance. Several candles and three shadeless lamps brilliantly illumined this consummate disorder, in the midst of which stood my aunt, her head dressed, powdered, feathered and flowered, examining, with the aid of an immense mirror and with a practised eye, her splendid costume of a marquise of the time of Louis XVI.

The waiting-maid and the dress-maker, both on their knees and with sleepy eyes, were twisting ribbons into knots and inserting pins of all imaginable sizes.

"Place that ribbon a little further to the left, Marie. Madame Savain, this bodice is fully an inch too wide! I am in a sack, Madame Savain!"

"Perhaps, Madame is laced a little tighter than usual?"

"To be sure. Do you not know that, in the time of Louis XVI., the ladies' waists were exceedingly slender? One should respect history or not undertake to impersonate a rôle, Madame Savain. The front is not bad. It is quite in conformity with the character." My aunt regarded her profile in the mirror.

"I fear that this bias, which Madame required me to cut after a copy of a costume of that time, and these laces for hiding the shoulders will not be altogether conducive to Madame's comfort."

"But you should know, Madame Savain, that the ladies of the time of Louis XVI. took pride in such things. No, no, nothing is exaggerated. Marie, give me the box of patches." My aunt moistened the tip of her finger, plunged it into the box with a nonchalant air and then, holding it up armed with a little black spot, she cast a penetrating glance upon her mirror, hesitated an instant, and, suddenly, with a resolute movement, a marvellous address, placed the patch exactly where she wanted it. She smiled slyly.

The fact is that this little beauty-spot, resembling in appearance a tiny lady-bug caught between two roses, was deposited with tact, with art, and, I may say, with exquisite taste. It was neither too high nor too low; it was exactly in its place, and, in the half shadow, the poor little insect seemed to be hiding itself.

"How late you are," said my aunt, turning towards me. "It is eleven o'clock and—we have a great deal to do yet." While saying this, a little laugh exposed a faultless set of pearly teeth. "Do you know that the horses have been waiting an hour and more? Ah! I know they will catch cold down there in the damp court-yard." With this she extended her tiny foot encased in a little red slipper gleaming all over with gold embroidery. Her foot being slightly fleshy projected over the top of her slipper.

"How do you like my looks?"

"But, Comtesse—but, dear aunt, I should say—" I was blinded by this July sun, the warmest of all the

year as you know—"I consider you adorable! How delightful your hair looks."

"It is very well dressed, is it not? Silvani did it, as usual; he has not his equal in all Paris. The diamonds sparkle admirably in the powder, don't you think so? Then, this style of head-dress, being high, lends to the neck so majestic an air. Do you know that I have always been quite proud of my neck; it is my sole vanity. Have you brought your little pots?"

"Yes, aunt; I have brought all my implements, and, if you will have the kindness to sit down, we will proceed to business."

"How pale I am! Don't you think a little rouge—just a little—would help my looks? You know what I told you, Ernest?" And she turned her head, presenting to me her right eye. Oh! I can see it still! "You know, my dear Ernest, that it is only on account of the demands of the occasion and in order to be in strict conformity with my historical costume, that I consent to—to use your paint!"

"My dear aunt, if you move, you will cause my hand to tremble." And, in fact, my hand did tremble as it touched her long lashes.

"Ah! yes; a little towards the corner; you are right; that lends an air of velvet softness, of uncertainty! What a strange little thing it is, this tiny pot of blue! Gracious! but it must be very ugly! Ah! but I suppose the one necessitates the application of the other. Use powder on the hair and you will be

forced to pass the lily white over the face in order not to be as yellow as a lemon; and, if the cheeks are once powdered, you are compelled to—you tickle me with your pencil—apply the rouge or have the look of a ghost! And, now, see how wicked the demon is: unless you increase the size of the eyes, after having done all this, they look as if they were bored out with an auger, don't they? And so we are led on, little by little. Ah! it's terrible!" My aunt laughed heartily. "Oh! how well you have done it! Under the eye; that's it! How it animates the glance! What wretches those creatures are; how well they know what is becoming! But with them it is shameful; it's artfulness—nothing more or less! Oh! you may apply a trifle more blue, if you wish. I know what it is, now. It really is not unbecoming, is it? But how you curve the eyebrows! Are you not afraid it will be rather too dark! But you are right! Where did you learn all that? Do you know that you would do a thriving business if you would practise your art!"

"There, aunt; are you satisfied?"

My aunt took her hand-glass, moved it to and fro, held it at a distance, brought it close to her face, blinked, smiled, and, at last, sinking back into her easy-chair:

"I cannot but confess that it is adorable, your—what did you say your friends called it?"

"Making-up, my dear aunt."

"What a pity they don't call it by some other name,

since society ladies have recourse to it. You will call soon again, Ernest? It certainly does lend a charmingly piquant air. But, tell me, have you not a little pot for the lips?"

"Certainly!"

"It's a liquid, is it not?"

"It's a sort of vinegar, as you see. Don't stir, my dear aunt."

"You will teach me your little art, will you not?"

"With pleasure."

"Ah! but your vinegar is miraculous! What brilliancy it gives to the lips, and how white and pearly the teeth look! Truly, my teeth have always been—"

"Another one of your little vanities!"

"There! That's all, is it not? Oh! thank you!"

My aunt smiled—and pouted charmingly, on account of the vinegar, which stung her lips.

Moistening her little finger, she placed another patch under the eye, then another at the corner of the mouth, and, radiant, adorable:

"Quick, quick; hide your mischievous pots!" she cried. "I hear your uncle coming! Here, clasp my bracelets for me. Midnight!—and my poor horses! Oh! they all will have sore throats!"

* * * * * * *

My uncle entered at this moment, in knee-breeches and domino.

"Am I intruding?" asked he, gayly, perceiving me in the boudoir.

"I suppose you are joking," said my aunt, laughingly. "I have offered Ernest a seat in our carriage: he also is going to the Ambassador's ball."

My uncle gazed upon my aunt in astonishment; his eyes beamed with pleasure and he offered her his gloved hand:

"You are delightful, this evening, my dear!" And then, with a cunning smile: "How fresh your complexion is, and how brilliant your eyes are!"

"Oh! it's the heat of the fire! I am almost smothered! But you are superb: I have never seen your beard so beautifully black before!"

"It is owing to my paleness. I am nearly frozen! Jean forgot to attend to my fire. Are you ready?"

And my aunt smiled upon me from behind her fan.

CHAPTER IX.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS—MY AUNT AS VENUS.

SINCE the day I kissed Madame de B——, her attitude towards me has been characterized by a coquettish reserve, which, however, is certainly charming. The mystery of the kiss has never been completely elucidated. I had just left Saint-Cyr when it occurred. I was full of spirit, and, at times, the giddiness of my heart completely blinded me. I say that this giddiness blinded me, and I am right, for, surely, one must be blind, indeed, to kiss his aunt as I did that day. But, let us continue.

She was well worth kissing. My dear little aunty, as I called her then, was certainly one of the prettiest women in the world, and coquettish and elegant also!

When I say I must have been blind, it is because I now think of the consequences that might have followed this kiss. Her husband, General de B——, being my superior officer, it might have plunged me into a maze of disagreeable difficulties, and then, again, there is a certain respect due one's own family.

But why do I summon up all these old recollections, which have nothing in common with what I wish to tell you? It was simply my intention to inform you that, since my return from Mexico, I

visit Madame de B—— quite often; and, perhaps, you do the same, for she is a highly esteemed lady. She receives every Monday evening, and there is, generally, quite a throng at her house. People seem to enjoy themselves very much in her society. She invents all sorts of amusements in order to be in fashion. I declare, however, that I never before saw anything at her house to equal what I saw there last Monday.

I was in the hall, and the valet was removing my overcoat, when Jean, approaching with a mysterious air, said to me:

"Monsieur, Madame desires to see you immediately in her apartment. Monsieur will have the kindness to pass down this passage and knock at the last door."

Although you may have just arrived from the other end of the world, such words will not fail to produce a certain effect. In spite of myself, I could not help thinking of the old story of the kiss. What could my aunt want of me?

I knocked very discreetly at the door, whereupon followed a series of half-suppressed titters.

"Not yet," cried a merry voice. "Wait a moment!"

"I do not wish any one to see me in this state," whispered another.

"But you are a perfect picture, my dear—since it is a question of art! Ah! ah! ah!" And there was great laughter and confusion on the other side of that wretched door.

"Enter," cried a voice, at last. I turned the knob.

At the first glance I could distinguish nothing but a perfect chaos, in the midst of which struggled my aunt in the folds of a flowing pink robe. Her long, loose hair hung in wavelets upon her shoulders, and Marie, her waiting-maid—another jewel, of whom I shall tell you something one of these days—was kneeling before her mistress lacing her little, glossy, pink satin boots, which were provided with very high and pointed heels.

The furniture, the carpet and the mantel-piece were groaning under the weight of a nameless mass of I know not what: muslin skirts thrown in every direction, laces, a pasteboard helmet covered with gilt paper, half-open jewel-boxes, knots of ribbons and a robe. The latter was torn in half; it had evidently been too small. Crimping-irons were plunged into the coals; little pots were everywhere, as well as brushes for the application of enamel and wrecks of all kinds. Behind two screens, which divided the chamber, I heard confused whispers and the peculiar rustling noise made by women in dressing. In a corner, Silvani, the illustrious Silvani, in an immense white apron, was putting away his puffs and pulling down his sleeves with an air of supreme satisfaction. I was petrified. What was going on at my aunt's?

"Ah! it is you, Ernest, is it?" And she laughed long and heartily, as do most women who have pretty teeth, adding, with the air of a conqueror: "You see we are about to play a comedy!"

Saying this, she turned towards me, with her madly provoking head-dress powdered to excess. Her face was painted like that of an ancient priestess and her glance was full of assumed languor.

I am not a child, but a captain of the Lancers and, moreover, rather curious; you will, therefore, easily understand that I must have seen a few things in my time. But I avow that I never was so seriously interested as that evening.

"Ladies of fashion," said I to myself, making a general survey of the scene, "must be possessed of Beelzebub himself to amuse themselves in such a way as this!" I added, aloud: "And whom do you intend to impersonate, my dear aunt, in a costume so remarkably bewitching?"

"Good evening, Captain!" cried a mellow voice from behind the screen on the right.

"We are waiting for you," said another from behind the screen on the left.

"Good evening, ladies! In what manner can I be of service to you?"

"We are not going to play a piece, you know," said my aunt. "How late you always are, my friend! Are they playing the comedy now? It is not a play—oh! not at all; it is a tableau vivant: 'The Judgment of Paris.' You know all about 'The Judgment of Paris,' don't you? I—I am to fill the rôle of Venus. I did not wish to take the part but they all pestered me to do so. Give me a pin, please—there's one on

the mantel-piece beside the bonbons—there, to the left, beside the jewel-box—near the glue-bottle, on my prayer-book. What! don't you see it? Ah! at last! They held a pistol to my throat, as it were, until I promised to be Venus. But hurry! hurry! Give me another pin! (Turning towards the screen to the right.) My dear, please pass me your lip-salve; mine is altogether too pale. (To the hair-dresser, who is moving towards the door.) Silvani, please go to the gentlemen who are dressing in the billiard-room and in the Baron's study. They may have need of you. Madame de S—— and her daughters are in the boudoir, you know. Ah! ascertain whether Monsieur de V—— has found his apple yet. He is to be Paris, you know," added my aunt, turning towards me. "That apple must not be lost! Well, my dear, are you going to pass me the lip-salve? Hand it to the Captain over the screen."

"Here is the salve, Captain; but be quick, for my cuirass breaks when I raise my arms!"

And I saw two tapering fingers, covered with brilliant rings, holding above the screen a little coverless pot.

"What! your cuirass is breaking, Marquise?"

"Oh! that will be all right; only take it quickly, Captain!"

"It may seem very droll to you, but I tremble like an aspen," cried my aunt. "Oh! I fear I shall be ill! Do you hear those gentlemen who are dressing in the

next room? What a noise they make! Ah! ah! ah! Is it not adorable? A real band of strolling players! Isn't this stage life, this feverish existence, lovely? Marie, close the door; I am perfectly benumbed by the draught! The actor's continual struggle with public opinion, the hisses, the applause — oh! they would drive me mad! But what has all that to do with the representation," continued my aunt. "The clock is striking ten! Ernest, do you know how to spread the white liquid!"

"Rather! Ah! ah!" cried some one behind one of the screens.

"But really," said my aunt, "it would be very extraordinary if, in all your travels, you have never seen any white liquid applied."

"Well, to speak truly, aunt, I am quite gifted in the application of the white liquid."

"They say it gives one the rheumatism. Does it, Captain?"

"Not at all. Have two logs put on the fire and give me the implements."

Saying this, I rolled up my sleeves and poured into a little onyx vase, which I found on the mantel-piece, some "Milk of Beauty;" then, wetting a small sponge with the liquid, I laughingly approached my Aunt Venus.

"Will you assure me that this preparation has no injurious effect upon the skin? I really dare not try it!" And my aunt simpered like a school-girl about

to be crowned for good conduct. "It is absolutely the first time that I have used the white liquid, you know. What a child I am! I tremble fearfully."

"How foolish you are, my dear! When one takes part in such representations, it is necessary to submit to the demands of the occasion!" laughed one of the ladies from behind a screen.

"Do you hear, aunt? Come, put out your arm."

She held out to me her large, shapely arm and I applied the wet sponge.

"Ah! la! la!" cried the Baronne; "but it's icy, you torment! a perfect shower bath! But tell me, Ernest, will it show to advantage in the light? Marie, my child, heap more wood on the fire. Your preparation dries very slowly, does it not, Captain?"

"It will take a quarter of an hour to dry, not longer; and then we will brush you with a very soft brush."

When one is frank, one should be wholly frank; therefore, I am going to tell you something in confidence. You suppose, doubtlessly, that when I saw the Baronne struggling and crying aloud, I hastened in the application of this icy white liquid, do you not? I did nothing of the kind, I assure you. I worked with a cunning and dissimulating slowness. But, for the third time, let us continue.

At this moment there was a knock at the door and, instinctively, I turned my head.

"What's the matter, now?" cried the Baronne. "Heavens! it's a perfect flood! Let no one enter. What's the matter?"

"Be quiet, my dear aunt."

"Don't come in," cried some one from behind a screen; "my cuirass has broken! Marie, Rosine, quick! Some pins, needles and the glue!"

"Pardon, aunt. I am grieved, deeply grieved. Be still, and I will dry it."

"Continue to paint me, please."

The knocking at the door was repeated, and I recognized the soft voice of M. de V——, which said:

"I am sorry, very sorry, Baronne, to disturb you, but—"

"Don't let any one enter!" cried all the ladies together.

"I do not wish to enter; but Raoul has urgent need of some blue forget-me-nots, Baronne."

"I will send them to you. Ernest, it's going to run again. I will send them immediately; it's all right! (In a low voice.) What a tiresome creature he is!"

"But that is not all, my dear Baronne."

"What else? Be quick, the liquid is drying and I can't stir."

"I cannot find my apple anywhere; is it in your room?"

"His apple, his apple! What do I know about his apple?"

"Ah! and then M. de Saint-P—— has broken his trident and torn his robe. How is he to get his robe mended?"

"I will send some one to mend it. But, Ernest, you

are going to brush me, are you not? I am literally frozen! He is absurd with his trident; he does not appear until the third tableau, 'Venus Rising from the Sea.'"

Another rap at the door, but, this time, at the one opening upon the corridor.

"Well, what's the matter, now?"

"Madame's torches have arrived," said a valet; "does Madame wish them lighted immediately?"

"Ah! they are for the Mlles. de N——, who are dressing in the second boudoir. No! of course not; they are not needed until the second tableau."

"Do not stir, aunt, I beseech you. So the Mlles. de N—— figure in the tableaux, do they?"

"Of course; with their mother; they represent 'The Lights of Faith pursuing Incredulity'; therefore, they must have torches. It will be, perhaps, the most attractive tableau of the evening. It is an indirect compliment to the nephew of Monseigneur, you know, —the dark young man with curly hair and angelic eyes; you saw him last Monday. He is very highly esteemed at court; he very kindly accepted our invitation for this evening, and then M. de Saint-P—— thought of arranging this tableau. M. de Saint-P—— has an inexhaustible imagination and so much taste— if he only would not break so many things!"

"Is he not a chevalier de Saint-Grégoire, also?"

"Yes; and, between us, I do not think he would object at all to being an officer."

"Oh! I now understand 'The Lights of Faith pursuing Incredulity.' But tell me, aunt, do I not brush you too forcibly? Lift up your arm a little, please. Who is to impersonate Incredulity?"

"Oh! don't speak of it; it's quite a history. As it happened, the distribution of the rôles took place precisely the same evening His Holiness' Encyclical was published, and, of course, the gentlemen were somewhat animated. M. de Saint-P—— was particularly excited, and, at one moment, I thought the General would go beyond all bounds. Well, to be brief, no one wished to have anything to do with Incredulity, and I was forced to have recourse to John, the General's coachman. You have seen him; he is quite a good-looking fellow, and, moreover, a protestant, I believe, so you see that the rôle will not be altogether inconsistent with his habits."

"It must, nevertheless, be disagreeable to these ladies to have to figure in the same tableau with a servant."

"Oh! well, such scruples must not be carried too far; this man will be blackened and lie flat on the floor; the three ladies will place their feet upon him; the laws of propriety will, therefore, be regarded. But have you not finished? My head-dress is very well arranged, is it not? Oh! there is no one like Silvani. He wished to apply a little rouge; but I shall wait until it has been more extensively introduced into our circle of society."

"Certainly, aunt, certainly. And now you are finished. Do you intend to go upon the stage immediately?"

"Oh! no. Goodness! it is nearly eleven o'clock. I am as timid as a child. The mere thought that I must appear in this costume before all these people takes my breath away! Do the flowers that fall from my hair hide my neck, Ernest? Will you not push them back a little?"

Then, approaching the door opening into the next room, she gave two little knocks, saying:

"Are you ready, Monsieur de V——?"

"Yes, my dear Baronne. I have found my apple, but am very much agitated. Are Minerva and Juno costumed? Oh! you have no idea how agitated I am!"

"Yes, yes; every one is ready. Tell them to ring the bell. Oh! how my heart beats, Captain!"

PART SECOND.—HOUSEKEEPING.

CHAPTER I.

FATHER Z——'S INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

LADIES AND SISTERS:

Cupid, in the matrimonial state, is entirely too much at ease: he lies, with too much nonchalance, at full length in too luxurious arm-chairs and contracts the habit of wearing a morning wrapper. His palate grows capricious, he is troubled with bad digestion, his appetite diminishes, and at evening, in the too comfortable folds of his carefully prepared nest, he reads his papers, yawns, dozes, snores and is unconscious. You may disagree with me in this, my sisters, and exclaim:

"You are wrong, Father Z——. You know nothing of matrimony—nothing at all, reverend celibate!"

But I declare to you that it is even as I have said, and, moreover, that you in reality decidedly and absolutely agree with me. Yes, your poor hearts have only too often throbbed in pain, and, sometimes, you have wept, poor angels, while vainly awaiting the realization of yesterday's dream.

"Alas!" you sigh, "is it then at an end? One day

of summer — then thirty years of winter! — and I so love to bask in the sunlight!" Such are your thoughts, my sisters.

Not knowing what to say, you raise no voice of complaint. Forgetting yourself in your doubts, you consider it your duty not to wake Monsieur when he has once fallen asleep; you have contracted the habit of walking on tip-toe in order not to break the deep silence, while your husband yawns deliciously as he succumbs to the influence of that doze which is but preparatory to profound slumber; or, he returns to his club, where he is received like the prodigal son; and you, poor poetess without pen and ink, take consolation in the contemplation of your sisters who follow the same road as yourself.

Every one of your pockets, ladies, is full of manuscripts: adorable poems and delightful romances; you need but a reader, and your husband seizes his hat and cane at the merest glimpse of the little characters you have traced. He is firmly persuaded that there are no romances save those in print, and, having read too many of those, he is of the opinion that no more should be written!

It is this state of affairs that you so heartily detest.

I look upon you, my dear sisters, as poor victims, and, with your permission, shall express my opinion of the subject in question.

Esteem and friendship are very pleasant and respectable sentiments, and as fully adapted to housekeeping

as our daily bread; but a dash of preserves does not spoil the tart, does it?

I cannot imagine why people take pleasure in representing marriage as a contract which, once signed, becomes a source of eternal regret.

I do not pretend to assert that it is not prudent to reflect upon the seriousness of the contract, but it should be done with less affectation. Warn persons that there are thorns, of course; but, by the gods! there is also something else in marriage — something else which renders its duties delightful and makes delicious those bonds which, if we should believe slander, are but the shackles of the galley-slave. Why, according to some, one might as well condemn himself to saw wood all his life as accept the hand of a pretty little woman, whose heart and head are as fresh and bright as the morning dew!

A stately husband — a little bald, if you wish — is very well, indeed; but a young husband, who loves you and drinks without hesitation from your glass, is much, very much better. Do not chide him if he happen to rumple your dress or to imprint a kiss upon your cheek in passing by. Bear in mind, rather, that he loves you! Do not be frightened if, in the evening, when the fire crackles merrily on the hearth, he cry out, suddenly, tapping his forehead:

"My little darling, sit down here; I have a new idea for arranging your hair!"

And what if he roll up his sleeves and entangle your curls a little—where is the harm? Oh! bless his child-

ishness and remember that behind this seeming folly is hidden your happiness! Thank heaven if in marriage, which they have represented to you as a career, you find a sunny and a joyous side; if in your husband you find the beloved reader of the pretty romance you have in your pocket; if, while wearing fine cashmeres and attaching costly jewels to your ears—which are very agreeable—you find in the society of your husband the joys of sincere love and affection—which are delightful!

Before accepting my theories, ladies, although your souls and consciences may pronounce them perfect, you will, beyond a doubt, have to conquer a few little prejudices, and, especially, to struggle against your education, which, as I have often said and now repeat, is deplorable. But these difficulties are by no means insurmountable. Remember that, under the pretext of education, you are simply stuffed, my dear sisters. You are varnished too soon, like those pictures which are prepared for sale, and which crack and split six months after the purchase. Your nature is entirely neglected; you are not cultivated: you are moulded and pressed like those yew trees of Versailles, which represent goblets and birds. But you are women, in spite of all this, although your resemblance to humanity is not very striking.

You are given to your husbands in a most deplorable condition: you are swaddled, deformed and filled with prejudices and social ideas as heavy and clumsy as paving stones, and all the more difficult to remove

because you look upon them as sacred. You enter upon the journey of marriage with so much baggage, generally and absurdly considered indispensable, that your husbands, who are not angels, grow irritable at the first station, despair of the entire encumbrance, leave you to attend to it yourself, and get into another car. I do not mean to say, understand me, that nature should be allowed to take its own course, or that your instincts, good or evil, should be permitted to have full sway; but I do mean to say that your poor minds should not be subjected to the same treatment as that to which the Chinese women of quality subject their feet—they should not be enclosed in porcelain shoes.

A marriageable girl is a product of maternal industry, requiring ten years for reconstruction and five or six years more of marital study to be reduced to her true and original shape.

It requires ten years to make a wife, and six years more to make of this wife a woman.

All this is time and happiness lost eternally, unless you strive to assist your husband in the process of your reconstruction.

The sole guarantee of good faith between man and wife is love. We never remain by the side of a travelling companion, unless we find pleasure and happiness in his society.

Do you not agree with me, my good sisters? Do you not feel that love, which is so often excluded from marriage, should be its veritable keystone? To make one's self loved—ah! there's the difficulty! Believe

the white-haired old man who tells you this, my sisters, and let him give you a few more words of advice.

Yes; I believe in marriage, joyful marriage, when two persons share each other's ideas and troubles, joys and affections. Exclude from this double life all personal importance and affectation, but season it with a dash of gallantry and companionship. Exercise, even in your intimacy, the same coquetry that renders you so agreeable in society. Seek to please your husband. Make him love you. Imagine that your husband is an audience whose sympathy must be gained. Think of those precious jewels which are placed so carefully, so artistically, in their caskets of satin; never forget the casket. Let your bower be one of pleasant shade, and make your presence felt by a thousand little nothings. Put a little of yourself in the arrangement of everything. Be artistic, delicate and cunning — you can do so with but a slight effort — and let your husband see in all that surrounds him, from the lace on the curtains to the perfume of your garments, that your sole and supreme desire is to please him.

Do not say to him: "I love you;" but lead him to ask: "Do you love me, darling?" — and answer "no," but with a little kiss that means "yes!" Let him feel, at your side, so happy in the present that he will forget the past, and be careful that nothing about you recall that past to his memory; he would never pardon you for that offence! You are characterized, above all, by a freshness of heart and mind. You are

inquisitive in regard to life and have need of development; you are innocent and your impressions are fresh. All this lends you — perhaps without your knowledge — an irresistible charm. Be yourself, and you will be, for your beloved husband, something new and a thousand times more charming than anything he knew of in the past. Conceal from him neither your candor nor your inexperience, neither your childish joys nor your infantile fears; but let all this be as coquettish as are your pretty features, your large, bright eyes and your long, wavy hair.

Use a little address and have confidence in yourself.

It is growing late; I shall, therefore, epitomize, as I do not wish to delay your dinner.

For heaven's sake, dear ladies, win back your husbands' hearts! And then, from time to time, when you are chatting together, think what good luck you have had and how happy you are in your mutual love!

May heaven smile benignly upon youth and sincerity. Let us love one another, and laugh with all our hearts while spring is in full bloom. Let us love our babies, the darlings, and our wives. Yes; that is moral and wholesome; the world is not a damp cloister and marriage is not the grave. Shame upon those who find in its holy companionship only sadness, weariness and sleep. Do you not understand that it is the family I am defending, that I am preaching the happiness of life and the joy of being one — that sweet joy of friendship and love which purifies our souls?

CHAPTER II.

AT THE TOWN HALL — AT CHURCH — MADAME'S IMPRESSIONS.

MARRIAGE at the Town Hall is certainly very important; but is it really possible for a person of delicate feeling to take this ceremony into serious consideration? I have undergone this painful formality, as has every one, yet I cannot think of what I was subjected to at the Town Hall without a feeling of humiliation. I had hardly alighted from my carriage, when I perceived, to the right, a muddy staircase; the walls were papered all over with advertisements and notices of every imaginable tint, and before one of them was a man in a maroon-colored overcoat, without a hat and with a pen behind his ear; under his arms were masses of documents and he was rolling a cigarette with his ink-stained fingers. To the left, through an open door, I perceived a dozen drummers of the National Guard, in a low, dark hall, smoking very strong, black pipes. My first thought on entering this barrack was that I had done well not to wear my gray dress. We ascended the stairs, and I saw a long, dimly-lighted corridor. It was very dirty and was ornamented with a great number of glazed doors upon which I read: "Funerals. Turn the Knob" — "Dispossession" —

"Deaths. Knock Loudly"—"Complaints"—"Births"—"Health," etc., and, at last, "Marriages. Turn the Knob, if You Please." At this door we entered, escorted by a small boy who carried a bottle of ink. The air in the room was thick, heavy, over-heated and sickening. Happily, however, a servant in a blue livery, who very closely resembled the drummers I had seen in the hall below, soon came and excused himself for not having introduced us, immediately upon our arrival, into the Mayor's Office (this is the waiting-room of the first class). I precipitated myself into this office as one, caught in a shower, precipitates herself into the first hack that passes. The Mayor's Office was characterized by an air of provincial and vulgar importance that amused me much. The clock was one of those which persons holding lucky numbers gain at the lottery conducted by the Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul. On the opposite wall hung a wheel-barometer, smiling gravely at the clock. A bookcase, standing in a very awkward position, seemed placed there for the sole purpose of concealing a door; and above the bookcase stood a plaster bust of Napoleon. In the middle of the room was an immense table covered with ink-stained green cloth.

Almost immediately, two individuals, one of whom resembled the cashier of the Petit-Saint-Thomas, brought in two registers, opened them solemnly and wrote therein for several minutes, looking up, now and then, to ask the age, the name and the surname of each

of us. When the cashier of the Petit-Saint-Thomas had finished writing, he read aloud with a nasal twang what he had composed, of which I understood absolutely nothing, except that my name and that of my betrothed were mentioned freely and frequently. We were then presented with pens, and we signed. The Mayor's clock struck two, and I had given my dressmaker an appointment in order that she might finish my basque!

"Is it over?" asked I of George, who, to my great astonishment, was very pale.

"Not yet, my dear," said he; "we must now pass into the marriage hall."

I was haunted by the phantom of my unfinished basque. We were then ushered into a large, empty hall with great bare walls, at the further end of which behind a few arm-chairs were arranged several rows of wooden benches, and over everything lay a thick coating of dust. I must have been in a very bad humor, for it seemed to me that I had entered a railway station, and I involuntarily looked at mamma and my aunts, whose faces were red with restrained merriment as they passed the empty benches. The official gentlemen, however, who evidently considered it their duty not to think as we thought, were very sedate and majestic. I noticed that George trembled in spite of himself. At last, the Mayor made his appearance. He was a small, awkward man, clothed in a black and very badly fitting suit—a very respectable person, however,

who had amassed a large fortune by selling iron bedsteads. But how could I possibly imagine that this embarrassed little gentleman, badly clothed and timid as he was, could by a single word, pronounced with hesitation, unite me in eternal bonds to my betrothed? And, then, his resemblance to my piano-tuner was fatal! No one noticed all this save myself, but to me it was shocking! A few moments before, it was the cashier of the Petit-Saint-Thomas! I bit my lips in order not to laugh aloud.

The Mayor saluted us in the manner peculiar to gentlemen wearing white cravats—that is to say very foolishly—and began the little ceremony. He recited, with great precipitation, several passages from the Code, giving the numbers of the paragraphs as he progressed, and I understood confusedly that I was menaced with gendarmes if I should dare to dispute or disobey, in any manner whatever, the orders and whims of my husband, or, if I should refuse to follow him wherever he might wish to lead me, be it to the sixth story of a house in the Rue Saint-Victor. I was continually on the point of interrupting the Mayor and exclaiming:

"Pardon, Monsieur, but your language is not at all polite, and you must know yourself that there is not the least common-sense in what you are saying!"

But I controlled myself, fearing lest I might intimidate the magistrate, who seemed to be in a great hurry to finish. He added, however, a few words concerning matrimonial and social duties, but all these beautiful

speeches, which, anywhere else, might have brought tears to my eyes, seemed, under the present circumstances, only grotesque—and I could not forget the dozen drummers smoking their black pipes and the long line of glazed doors, on which I had read: "Health" — "Funerals" — "Deaths" — "Dispossession," etc. The fact that this dealer in iron bedsteads touched upon that which had been the subject of my cherished dreams would really have caused me a pang, if the humorous side of my situation had not absorbed my entire attention.

"George ——, do you swear to take Bertha —— as your lawful wife, etc.?" asked the Mayor, as he bent forward.

My husband bowed and murmured "yes," but in a very low tone. He has often told me since that he was never more affected in all his life than when he pronounced this "yes."

"Bertha ——," continued the magistrate, as he turned towards me, "do you swear to take George —— as your lawful husband, etc.?"

I assented, smilingly, and said to myself:

"Yes, of course, since I came here expressly for that purpose!"

That was all. I was married!

My father and my husband shook hands like good friends who had not seen each other for the last twenty years. Great tears stood in their eyes. As for myself, it was impossible for me to share their emotion. I was

very hungry, and we stopped the carriage at the pastry-cook's before mamma and I went to the dress-maker's.

The next morning ushered in the great day, and I arose with the sun. I opened the drawing-room door: my robe was spread out on the sofa and the veil, carefully folded, was lying beside my robe; my slippers and my wreath were smiling from the depths of a white silk box. Nothing was wanting. I drank a large glass of water. I was excited, restless, happy and trembling. It was the morning of a battle in which I was sure to be decorated! I thought neither of the past nor of the future; I was altogether engrossed by the ceremony, the most solemn of all, by the oath I was to take before God—and also by the idea of the immense throng in gala dress which would assemble expressly to see me pass.

We breakfasted very early. My father wore his boots, dress pantaloons, white cravat and wrapper. My mother was also partly in fête costume. It seemed to me that the domestics served me with the greatest care and respect; I even recollect that Marie said to me: "Does Madame know that the hair-dresser has arrived?"—*Madame!*—the excellent girl! I have not forgotten her.

It was impossible for me to eat: my throat was dry and I trembled with impatience. The tones of the great organ pursued me, and my mind was filled with recollections of the marriage of Emma and Louis. I went to my room to dress; the hair-dresser also called

me Madame, and did his work so well that I could not help exclaiming: "What a splendid beginning; this head-dress is a good omen!"

When I was dressed, I passed into the parlor, in order to have more room and to shake my robe a little. My father and George were already there, speaking with animation:

"Have the carriages arrived?"

"Yes."

"And have you arranged for the chanting of the Salutaris Hymn?"

"Yes, it is attended to."

"And the wedding-ring?"

"Of course, I have the ring."

"Ah! where is my ticket of confession? Ah! I left it in the carriage."

All this was spoken very rapidly, the two gesticulating like the busiest persons in the world. As soon as George saw me, he pressed his lips upon my hand, and, while the waiting-maids were grouped around me arranging my skirts and the hair-dresser was clipping my veil, he said to me, in a very hoarse voice:

"You are charming, my dear!"

He was not thinking the least in the world of what he was saying, and I replied, mechanically:

"Do you think so? Not too short, M. Silvani. Don't forget the bow, Marie."

When it is necessary to have an eye upon everything, one has not too much presence of mind. How-

ever, I remembered the hoarseness of George's voice, and I said to myself: "I am sure he has taken cold; one can easily see that he has had his hair cut too short." I soon knew that I was right.

"What a cold you have, George!" said my father.

"Oh! don't speak of it!" replied George, in a very low tone of voice.

It was foolish, I know, but I was almost angry with George for having been so imprudent. I soon forgot it, however, and we entered the carriage. I felt that all eyes were upon me and perceived, confusedly, that the entire street was filled with curious spectators.

The strokes of the beadles' staffs will ever find an echo in my heart. We remained standing a single moment on the red carpet. From the great organ pealed forth a triumphal march in all its grandeur, thousands of smiling faces were turned towards me, and, at the extremity of the long aisle, amid sunlight, incense, gold and velvet, were two gilded arm-chairs, upon which we were to sit before the altar. I cannot tell why an old engraving in my father's study suddenly came into my mind. This engraving represents the entrance of Alexander into the city of Babylon; he is seated upon an elephant gleaming with jewels. You must have seen it. But Alexander was guilty of many crimes, while I was pure.

As I passed, all the heads bowed like a field of grain before the breeze. My friends, my relatives and my acquaintances greeted me with smiles of gladness, and

I perceived—for one sees everything, in spite of one's self, on such solemn occasions — that everybody thought me superb. On reaching the gilded chairs, I knelt immediately upon the praying-desk and thanked God for his goodness. The triumphal tones of the organ were hushed, and I heard my poor mother weeping at my side. Oh! I know what a mother's heart must feel in the midst of such a ceremony! As I looked at the priests, who were advancing with great solemnity, I perceived George; he seemed annoyed, and his lips were tightly compressed. I have never entirely forgiven him for not being more impressed by what transpired that day; but men cannot understand the poetry of such a scene.

The discourse of Monseigneur, who married us, was a masterpiece, and, morever, was pronounced with that deep earnestness and that graceful dignity which, as you know, characterize his every word. He spoke of our two families. One might have heard a pin drop, so deep was the silence in which the assembly listened to the voice of the prelate. Then, he turned towards me, intimating by a thousand delicate allusions that I was about to marry one of the noblest officers of the army. Monseigneur then addressed George, in a sweet and earnest voice:

"Monsieur," said he, "you are going to take as a companion a young woman"—I hardly dare to recollect all the graceful and delicate remarks the prelate made about me—"a young woman raised piously by

a Christian mother, who has imparted to her all her own virtues and charms." Mamma sighed deeply. "She will love her husband as she has loved her father—a father full of tenderness, who, from her cradle, taught her the beauty of noble sentiments and the virtues of disinterestedness." Papa smiled, complacently. As the prelate pronounced these words, a sunbeam fell upon his venerable forehead; I saw it through my tears.

Monseigneur then requested us to arise, and we remained standing, one before the other. We exchanged rings, and the prelate pronounced, slowly and gravely, several words of Latin the meaning of which I could not understand, but which moved me infinitely, for his hand, white, delicate and transparent, seemed to bless me. At the same time, the censers, swung by the hands of children, filled the air with a sweet perfume. What a day! I was dazzled, confused and overwhelmed. I recollect, however, the hat trimmed with white roses which Louise wore. Is it not strange that some persons have an absolute lack of taste?

On going to the sacristy, I gave my arm to the General, and it was then that I beheld the audience face to face. Every one seemed moved.

I was soon surrounded and greeted by great throngs. The sacristy was filled to overflowing with persons anxious to congratulate me, and I responded to all the smiles and compliments by a little nod. I was married!

CHAPTER III.

MY WEDDING NIGHT.

THANKS to the habits of country life and to the solemnity of the occasion, nearly every one had retired early. Everybody had pressed my hand, some with official gravity resembling condolence and others with a silly cordiality equally disagreeable.

General de S—— and the Préfect, two very old friends of the family, lingered long at the card-table.

But I have forgotten to tell you that this occurred on the evening of my marriage, and I was, seriously, very tired. During the entire day, I had had about two hundred persons at my heels. All day long, I had smiled without wincing. On quitting the church, guns had been fired under my very ears, and I had been offered an enormous bouquet. Moreover—this is sub rosa—since eight o'clock in the morning, my poor feet had been unmercifully compressed in too narrow boots, and, at this moment, it was, at least, half-past twelve.

I had conversed with everybody, except my dear little wife, from whom they seemed to take pleasure in separating me. Once, as I ascended the stairs, I secretly pressed her hand; but this act cost me a black look from my mother-in-law, which called me back to the realms of reality. Perhaps you have passed

through this day of violent effusion and general expansion? If so, you will agree with me, Monsieur, that one is at no moment in life more disposed to irritability.

What can you say to cousins who kiss you, to aunts who hang upon your neck and weep the starch out of your vest, to all those radiant faces which surround you, to all those eyes which stare you out of countenance for twelve long hours and to all those bursts of tenderness which you have not solicited?

At the close of such a day, the heart is weary. You ask yourself: "Is it not yet at an end? Is there another tear to be shed, another compliment to be received or another hand to be pressed? Is everybody satisfied? Have they stared at the husband long enough? Am I positively sure that there is no one else to be served? May I think of my own affairs at last?" All this passes through your mind like a flash of lightning. You had not thought of it before. At this very moment, your bride is in her apartment; her cheeks are suffused with blushes. Her mother and her aunt, her cousin and the friend of the family surround her and smile upon her. The question is who shall take the orange blossoms from her wavy hair and who shall press the last kiss upon her rosy lips!

Ah! tears come into her eyes, but they wipe them away. Her mother whispers something to her daughter, speaks to her of sacrifice, of the future, of necessity, of obedience, and finds means of blending consolation with her simple but preconcerted words.

The poor child understands nothing at all of all this, unless it be that this young man—she is afraid to call him otherwise, even in her thoughts—is about to enter as conqueror and address her in marvellous words. The poor child fears to speak; she trembles, weeps and shivers like a partridge in the hedges. The last words of her mother and the final adieux of her family still ring in her ears, but she cannot grasp their meaning; her mind, where is her poor mind? She cannot tell, but it comes no longer to her assistance. Like a recruit, to whom the order is given not to break the crystal of his watch, she can neither listen to nor understand the warning.

"Ah! my good Captain," said I to myself, "in spite of all this terror, she loves you! Do you recollect the kiss she allowed you to take on leaving church that evening when the good Abbé preached so well?—and then, those little pressures of the hand, those stolen glances! Happy Captain!"

I walked restlessly up and down the little parlor.

Suddenly, the General, who continued his eternal game of écarté with the Préfect, turned towards me:

"What a racket you are making, George!" said he. "Will you yield, Préfect?"

"Not at all, General! I experience, I shall not attempt to conceal it, a certain emotion, and—"

"The king—one—and four trumps. My dear friend, your luck has deserted you," cried he to the Préfect, as he pocketed several louis which were lying upon the

table; then, turning to me: "Well, George, the fact is that you consider yourself obliged to keep us company, is it not? It is already late, and B—— is three good leagues from here. My gracious! has everybody gone?"

"Good night, General, good night!"

My superior took his departure, and I heard him enter his carriage.

"At last," said I to myself, "at last!"

I glanced involuntarily at my image in the mirror—I was purple, and my boots—I am ashamed to acknowledge it—troubled me sorely. I was furious that so grotesque a detail as boots should attract my attention at such a moment, but what could I do?

The clock struck one—and my mother-in-law appeared. Her eyes were red, and her gloveless hand was pressing a visibly humid handkerchief.

Upon seeing her, my first movement was one of impatience; I said to myself: "Another quarter of an hour, at least!"

Madame de C—— sank into an arm-chair, took my hand and melted into tears, sighing: "George—my friend—George—my son!"

I felt that I was by no means equal to the occasion: "My good Captain," thought I, "find a tear, find a tear; you cannot extricate yourself worthily without that, for, unless you manage to weep a little, your mother-in-law will be offended!"

No sooner had this stupid thought occurred to me

than it took full possession of my mind and filled my heart with an absurd and foolish gayety.

"Be calm, Madame, be calm."

"How can I, George? Pardon me, my son!"

"Do you doubt my affection, Madame?"

I felt that this 'Madame' was somewhat too cold, but I was afraid of casting a reflection upon the age of Madame de C—— by calling her mother; I knew that she was a little coquettish.

"Oh! I have no doubt of your affection. Go, dear son, go; forget my tears and lead her a happy life. Have no fears for me. I am strong."

Nothing is more intolerable than an emotion you do not share. I murmured the word "mother!" thinking that, after all, she would be touched by such a burst of feeling. Then, bending over, I kissed her—with a grimace, for so many tears had given a salty and disagreeable taste to my mother-in-law's cheek!

* * * * * *

It had been decided that we should pass the first week after our marriage at the château of Madame de C——. A little nuptial apartment, very nice in appearance and furnished in Persian blue, had, therefore, been provided for us.

One room had been reserved especially for me, and it was to this cosy nest that I retired, four steps at a bound, after having kissed my mother-in-law. Upon an arm-chair, drawn near the fire, lay my wrapper and slippers. I did not hesitate a single instant, but

removed my boots frantically. I strove to be calm, and reflected a few moments upon my situation.

"Captain," thought I, "the clock is on the point of striking a solemn hour. Your future happiness depends upon the manner in which you cross yonder threshold. Captain, be prudent. Your fair-haired bride is just beyond this door; she watches, waits and listens for you; she hears your every movement. Every footfall upon the floor sends a thrill through her precious little heart!" I murmured this to myself as I removed my coat and untied my cravat. "There is but one line of conduct for you to pursue," I added. "Be calm, good, gentle and loving, but, at the same time, do not fail to let her perceive the vivacity of an ardent affection and the attractive aspects of an iron nature." A sudden change of thought caused me to put on my coat again. I was ashamed to enter my wife's room in my wrapper. Would this not have seemed to say: "My darling, I am at home; only see how perfectly at ease I am." It would have been setting up a claim to rights which were not yet mine; I, therefore, resumed my coat, and, after a thousand minute cares bestowed upon my toilet, approached her door and gave three discreet, low raps. Oh! I assure you that I trembled at the sound of those raps and pressed my hand upon my breast to still the beating of my heart. All the submissive tenderness, discretion and prayer that human lips can express were expressed in those three little knocks. She spoke not one word

in reply, and, after a moment of agony, I decided to knock again. How I wished to say: "It is I, my darling; may I not enter?" But I felt that this phrase would require an extreme perfection of intonation, and I was afraid of failing; I remained quiet, therefore, with a smile upon my lips, as if she could have seen me, and stroked my moustache, which I had slightly perfumed.

I soon heard a little dry cough, which seemed to reply to my knocks and grant my prayer. You can see in all this to what degree of perfection women possess that exquisite tact and delicacy which are entirely wanting in us. Could any one say better or in a more agreeable manner: "Come; I hear you, my friend—my husband!" I turned the knob, and the door slid noiselessly open over the soft, downy carpet. I was in the room of my bride.

My cheeks were fanned by a delicious warmth, and I inhaled a vague perfume of violet or orris with which the apartment was impregnated. Everything was in charming disorder: the ball costume was lying upon the lounge, two lamps were burning beneath rose-colored shades, and on the mantel-piece were a thousand trifles and a somewhat faded bouquet of white flowers. I approached Louise. I avow that I was, at this moment, the most embarrassed man on earth. I murmured: "Well, my darling, well!" One says what one can at such moments; I could find nothing more appropriate, although I searched.

I received no reply, and yet she was awake. My embarrassment was doubled. This silence froze me.

"Come," I murmured; "will you not speak to me?"

"Let me sleep—please," said she, at last, with a little suppliant air; "I am so tired!"

"Sleep, my beloved angel, sleep without fear. I am going. Sleep while I watch over you!"

* * * * * * *

"Now, Captain," said I to myself, "throw yourself into the arm-chair, and good night."

I reached the arm-chair, into which I dropped, seeking a comfortable position, like a soldier who bivouacs. All would have been well had not the terrible cold cut into my flesh! I saw nothing within reach which could protect me!

"Captain," said I to myself, "the position is untenable. To-morrow morning you will be crippled."

I waited one long moment, struggling against the increasing cold. At last, when the breathing of my wife became more regular and she seemed asleep, I stretched out my arm, grasped the little bellows and strove to revive the fire.

If I had not sworn to be sincere, dear reader, I know not whether I should acknowledge that I felt, at this instant, horrible prickings in the nasal regions. I wished to control myself, but the laws of nature admit of no escape. My respiration suddenly ceased, I felt that a superhuman force contracted my features, that my nostrils dilated, that my eyes closed, and I sneezed

with terrible violence! I heard a little cry from the other room, but, immediately after, the frankest, the most silvery, the most ringing of all ringing laughs succeeded the cry, and a soft, flute-like voice said:

"Did you hurt yourself—George?"

She said "George" after a short pause, and in so low a tone that I almost failed to hear it.

"I am very absurd, am I not, my dear little one? You are right in making fun of me! But what can you expect? I am passing the night in the open air, and must submit to the consequences."

"You are not at all absurd, but you are taking cold." And she laughed again.

"You mischievous creature!"

"That is a cruel expression, and I should do well to let you get sick!" This was said with an adorable coquetry, with a mixture of timidity, affection and mockery impossible to describe, but which made me feel that I was very stupid.

"You will pardon me, will you not?" said she, after a pause.

"You love me then a little, darling?" I murmured in her ear.

I distinguished, in a confused sigh, a little whispered "yes."

Heavens! how many times have we laughed merrily, as we recalled these souvenirs of an already distant past!

CHAPTER IV.

THE BLUE DIARY—MADAME'S IMPRESSIONS AGAIN.

TOWARDS midnight, mamma gave me a significant glance and, in the midst of a very animated waltz, we left the parlor. In the vestibule, the busy domestics stepped aside to allow us to pass; but I felt that even their eyes were fixed upon me with that curiosity which had haunted me all day long. The great door leading into the park was wide open, although the evening was cool, and I perceived, in the partial obscurity, the indistinct outlines of groups of peasants who had come to enjoy the fête through the windows. These good people were laughing and whispering, but they paused for an instant as we approached the staircase, and I understood that it was I upon whom all those eyes were fixed, that I was the object of all those smiles. My mother's face was greatly flushed and huge tears rolled down her cheeks.

Why was it that an occasion so gay and joyful to the peasants was so sad to her?

As to myself, as little disposed to laugh as to cry, I was, at the same time, confused, triumphant, humiliated, charmed and uneasy. Upon quitting the parlor, I felt for an instant like one who has just witnessed a grand display of fire-works. The lights were extin-

guished and the noise was hushed; the fête was at an end, and I found myself in the darkness of night, face to face with a new condition of life.

When I think of it now, I can hardly keep a straight face. How many foolish terrors assailed me at that moment!

When we reached the second story, mamma stopped with a sob, then took my head between her hands, kissed my forehead and cried: "Valentine!" I was not very deeply moved by mamma's behavior, for I knew that she ascended the stairs with difficulty since she had grown corpulent; I thought that a desire to rest and take breath without seeming to do so might have something to do with her sudden pause. But at each creaking of the floor I shuddered, thinking: "He is coming, perhaps, even now!"

We entered the nuptial chamber: it was as coquettish as possible to the eye, soft and elegant. It was beautifully furnished in the style of Louis XVI. and was adorned with Beauvais tapestries. The bridal couch, especially, was a marvel of elegance—I was not aware of this, however, until a week afterwards. It seemed to me, at the first glance, that I had entered a solemn place; the air appeared heavy and I was alarmed.

"This is your room, my child," said my mother; "but, first of all, come sit down at my side, my darling daughter."

At these words we both burst into tears, and my mother continued in the following terms:

"The kiss that you give me now is the last childish kiss I shall ever receive from you. Your husband, for George is now your husband—"

Upon hearing this name pronounced, I trembled, and, by a strange mental freak, I imagined Monsieur George —George — my husband—in a night-cap and wrapper! This vision darted through my mind like a flash of lightning in a tempest. I saw him as plainly as if he had been there! The night-cap was pulled down over his forehead and touched his eyebrows; he clasped my hand and cried: "At last, Valentine, you are mine! Do you love me?" And, shaking his head as he uttered these words, his horrible locks of hair, protruding from under the night-cap, shook also!

"What a foolish thought!" said I to myself. "Yet my father wears these horrors, and my brother, although quite young, has similar ones stowed away in his bureau. All men wear them, and at all ages!" It is frightful to say, but George appeared to me now with a red and green bandana handkerchief wound about his head! I passed my hand rapidly over my eyes in order to banish these diabolical visions.

My mother, however, had continued to speak during all this time, and, attributing my movements to the emotion caused by her words, she said, soothingly:

"Do not be alarmed, my darling Valentine, perhaps I have thrown too dark shadows upon the picture; I have done so because my experience and my heart impose this duty on me."

I had never heard my mother express herself with so much facility, and was all the more surprised on that account. Not knowing what to reply, I threw myself in her arms. She repulsed me gently an instant afterwards and said:

"You suffocate me, darling."

She made very free use of her handkerchief, from which the water could have been wrung; then, after drying her eyes, she turned to me and said, with a smile:

"Having now told you all that my conscience imposes upon me, I am strong!"

"Heavens!" thought I, "what obscurity! Mamma has said solemn things to me, thus fulfilling, it seems, what she considered to be her sacred duty—and I have not understood one word — not one!" I was a little angry with mamma, I hardly dare acknowledge it, for having been so incomprehensible.

I did not make all these reflections until afterwards; at that moment I experienced only a terrible uneasiness, an undefined agitation.

"At this very instant," thought I, "they notice that I am no longer in the parlor; they whisper: 'Where is the bride?' Monsieur George is restless. What is he doing? What does he think? Where is he?"

Just then there was a knock at the door. "It is we," cried several voices, among which I distinguished those of my Aunt Laure and my godmother; Madame de P——, who never misses an opportunity of pressing

her thick lips upon any one's cheeks, accompanied them. The eyes of these ladies sparkled and their faces wore a curious expression which intimidated me greatly. Had they also sacred duties to perform?

"Oh! but you are too pretty, my dear!" cried Madame de P——, kissing me upon the forehead in that humid fashion peculiar to her; then she sat down in one of the large easy-chairs in the style of Louis XVI.

"How pale you are, darling!" said my aunt; "but do not tremble in that manner!" At this my mother again burst into tears.

My waiting-maid had not been permitted to enter the room; therefore, all these ladies removed their gloves and placed themselves at my service.

"The oldest friend of the family (she always called herself thus) could by no means do less than make herself useful on such an occasion," murmured Madame de P——, holding her eye-glass to her eye and critically surveying me. "Poor dove! what lovely arms and shoulders she has! There is, not far from here, a young husband whom I do not altogether pity!"

"And there is also a little wife for whom I have no pity!" said my aunt. "Oh! there is nothing in that to make you blush, dear! The fact is that the Captain is one of the finest men I know. Well, he is not exactly what one calls a handsome man — as was your uncle, for example. You do not recollect your uncle, but Madame de P—— must remember him."

"He was ideal. Oh! ideal in every sense of the

word! I can still see him at the altar: he was as pretty as a picture and wore knee-breeches!"

"Oh! yes, he was handsome — but I know what it costs to have a handsome husband! You have simply taken a fine one, my child, and you have done well!"

I passed into a little boudoir to complete my toilet. There I found, upon a marble table, five or six bottles of perfume decked with pink, white and blue ribbons. This was a polite attention for which I thanked my Aunt Laure. I felt the blood rush to my head, and my ears were filled with an insupportable jingling and ringing. Now that I can judge coldly of my former sensations, I attribute this rather to anger than anything else. I should have been happy could I have been transported, at that moment, to the most obscure corner of the wildest of American forests, so exaggerated and unseemly appeared to me this curious tenderness which pursued me everywhere with its engaging attentions. I wished to commune with my thoughts; I longed for a moment, a single moment, of silence, calmness and solitude; I desired to look into my heart, to understand my emotion more clearly and to offer up a little, earnest prayer.

Meanwhile, through the half-open door, I heard the ladies chatting in low tones. I, however, crossed the room, cast off the pretty little slippers which my dear Louise had worked for me, and retired.

At last, the ladies arose, and, after having examined the room, doubtless for the purpose of seeing that nothing was wanting, they approached my couch.

"Farewell, my darling child," said my mother, bending over me.

She embraced me, covered her eyes with her handkerchief, which was now wet through and through, and precipitately left the room.

"Remember that the oldest friend of the family kissed you, this evening," said Madame de P——, and she moistened my forehead.

"Good night, darling!" said my aunt, and she departed with a smile on her countenance.

I was alone, at last. I listened: the doors closed, I heard the rumbling of a departing carriage and the flames of the two lamps trembled, as they were reflected in the mirror. So profound a silence after so great a tumult troubled me to such a degree that I shivered from head to foot. I strove to concentrate my thoughts upon the ceremony, the banquet and the ball. I said to myself, as I clasped my hands: "How was Marie dressed? She wore a—a—a—" I uttered this little phrase aloud in order to give it more weight and to oblige my mind to respond; but it was impossible for me to banish the thought of my husband.

"He will soon come! What is he doing now? Where is he? He is ascending the stairs, perhaps! How shall I receive him?"

I loved him, oh! with all my soul I loved him—I may confess it now; but then it was all so vague, so vague! To think of him, I descended into the innermost chambers of my heart, bolted the door and hid

myself in the darkest corner. I felt that he was very dear to me, dearer than life itself! I had so much to tell him in confidence, and I was ready to place the keys of my heart in his hands. But would I ever have the courage to do all that? Heavens! how unhappy I was! From time to time, I seemed to hear approaching sounds; I held my breath and listened. At last, at a certain moment, the floor gave forth a sound like a heavy sigh, a door leading into the passage was opened with a thousand precautions, and I distinctly heard the creaking of a boot! A boot! I was filled with terror! By an involuntary movement I sought concealment. My heart throbbed as if it would burst!

The creaking of the boot ceased and I heard, very near me, on the other side of the slight partition, the rolling of an arm-chair over the carpet and then a little, dry cough. It was he! But for the partition I could have touched him with my finger. A few moments after I distinguished the sound of steps upon the floor, but it was so soft that it was almost imperceptible. This noise, slight as it was, resounded in my brain with an extreme violence. All of a sudden my respiration and the beating of my heart were arrested: there was a gentle tap at the door. I was speechless. The knocking was repeated. In my agitation I coughed lightly. It was enough: the door was opened and I divined that some one was in the room.

This some one, who seemed to glide over the carpet,

advanced towards me, and, out of the corner of my eye, I saw his gigantic shadow projected upon the wall. I could hardly suppress my joy on noting that my Captain wore neither night-cap nor bandana handkerchief! And yet his shadow on the wall gave such prominence to his nose that I could not keep back a sigh! How strange it is that one recollects so distinctly all these trifling details!

Why was it that my terror vanished at the first word that fell from George's lips? His voice was so assured, so soft, he asked permission so gayly to approach the fire and warm his feet, and spoke of the incidents of the day with such enjoyment and fervor that I was absolutely charmed. I risked a glance. I saw him comfortably seated in a large arm-chair before the fire! George was never wittier, more affectionate or more a man of the world; he had not changed in the least. Either he must have been a veritable monster of dissimulation or I must have seemed a very exalted personage in his eyes!

"I am sure you are overcome with fatigue, darling," said he.

This word darling made me tremble but did not frighten me at all; it was the first time he had ever called me thus, yet I really could not refuse him the privilege of addressing me in this manner. Be it as it may, I was reserved and replied in the tone in which one says: "No, thank you; I do not drink tea." I answered:

"Oh! yes; I am tired!"

"I thought so," said he, approaching me; "your poor eyes are nearly closed and you cannot even look into my face, my darling little wife. I shall leave you," he continued, "for you need repose." And he came nearer and nearer to me, which was not at all natural. Then, extending his hand, which I knew was white and delicate: "Will you not give me a little clasp of the hand, my darling? I also am very weary, my pretty little wife."

His features wore a considerate expression, but I saw clearly that he was no more sleepy than I was.

* * * * * * *

August 7.—Many, many times have I read thee, in the last two years, my poor little blue diary; and how many marginal notes might I add, if thou wert not condemned to feed this autumn's flames! How did I ever dare to confide all this to thee? Why did I not trust thee with more secrets? No one has ever seen thee—at least, no one has ever turned over thy pages! Enter quickly into thy hiding-place and await the first fire of autumn! But, before I leave thee, one more kiss from thy Valentine!

CHAPTER V.

THE BLUE DIARY AGAIN.

TO think that I was on the point of casting thee into the flames, my poor darling! How foolish I was! To whom could I confide all my secrets, to whom tell all those little things at which everybody laughs, but which bring tears to my eyes, if I had not thee?

This evening, for example, I dined all alone, as George had an invitation to a friend's in the city. Well, shall I confess that, as soon as I found myself alone, face to face with a leg of mutton cooked exactly to his taste, and beside the great carving-knife which usually lies before his plate, I began to cry like a child? Shall I confess I drank from his Bohemian glass, of which he is so fond, in order to console myself a little?

But people would laugh in my face if I should tell them all this; good Father Cyprien himself, whose heart overflows with the dew of tenderness, would say:

"It is nothing, my dear child, it is nothing!"

I know good Father Cyprien so well! But you, my poor little diary, always listen patiently; if a tear escape me, you drink it in graciously and always preserve a trace of it. Therefore, I love you.

But now that we are alone together, let us chat a little. You will not be angry if I write with a pencil, will you, darling? You see, I am very comfortably installed in my great arm-chair, and do not wish to soil you with ink-blots. The fire crackles cheerfully on the hearth, and the street without is silent as the grave. Let us forget that George will not return before midnight, and talk of the past.

I cannot think of the first months of this past without laughing and crying at the same time.

How foolish we were! How charming it was!

They say there is one method of learning to swim which is not altogether the worst. It consists in throwing the future swimmer into the water and praying Fate to help him. They say that he never experiences any difficulty in floating, after the first lesson. Well, I find that we are taught to be man and wife by the same method!

Happily or unhappily—it is a question which—marriage is a hurricane.

Without the least transition, but by a sudden flash, everything changes color and is radically transformed; the former carefully dressed and well-combed gentleman appears before you in a morning-wrapper and slippers.

But, after all, why complain? Where would be all those pleasant souvenirs if we entered into housekeeping as we enter into a mill, if we had not trembled a little on knocking at the gate? And, really, souvenirs

are so pleasant to the heart that we might often wish to clothe the future in the garments of the past.

I recollect it well: it was the second day after the great event. I had entered his room—I have forgotten why; for the sole pleasure of entering, probably, and thereby acting as a wife should. What a strong desire is that which fills your mind, as you leave church after mass, and compels you to endeavor to appear like an old married lady! You muffle yourself in a bonnet with long ribbons, you never promenade without the eternal cashmere shawl, you always say "at my house" —those charming words!—and afterwards you bite your lips to prevent yourself from laughing aloud. And then "my husband" and "my waiting-maid"— and the first dinner you order without ever thinking of the soup! All that is charming, and as ill at ease as you feel in these new garments at first, you have, nevertheless, a mania to wear them.

I had, however, entered my husband's room. He had been standing a quarter of an hour before his glass, engaged in the prosaic operation of shaving.

"Pardon, my dear," said he, smiling and putting more lather on his face. "With your permission I will continue. Do you wish anything?"

"On the contrary," I replied, "I came to see if you had need of anything." And greatly embarrassed, for I was afraid of being indiscreet and was not quite sure that one might enter her husband's apartment thus, I added: "Have your shirts all the buttons on?"

"Oh! what an excellent little housekeeper I have married! Do not trouble yourself about such trifles, darling; I shall request your waiting-maid to take care of the buttons."

I was confused and afraid of appearing too school-girlish before my husband. He continued to lather his face with his shaving brush. I wished to go away, but was so strangely interested by my husband's novel appearance that I had not the courage to leave the room.

He stopped suddenly. It seemed to me, however, that he was afraid of appearing too ludicrous to me with his face all white with lather. It would have pleased me better had he continued without embarrassment; I wished to see how he could possibly shave without cutting his moustache, and how he parted and brushed his hair with the two round brushes I saw upon the table; I wished to discover what use he made of all those little instruments arranged in order upon the marble slab of the wash-stand: pincers, scissors, tiny combs, little pots and flasks with gilt covers and an entire arsenal of those gleaming trifles which give one a desire to be careful of one's personal appearance.

"Well, my dear, why do you look at me in so strange a manner?" said he, smiling.

I stared at the carpet and blushed. Although interested, I was ill at ease amid all these novelties. I knew not what to reply, and, mechanically, I dipped my finger into the little porcelain soap cup.

"But what is the matter with you, darling?" said he, bringing his face close to mine. "Have I caused you any pain?"

I never could account for the strange idea that then entered my mind; I drew my hand rapidly from the porcelain cup, and deposited on the exact centre of his nose the lather which clung to my finger. He laughed outright, and I did the same, though I trembled an instant, fearing that I had offended him.

"Ah! is that the way you treat a captain of the Lancers? You shall pay for it, terrible, shocking little darling that you are!" And, brush in hand, he chased me about the room. I ran around the table and sought refuge behind the arm-chairs, overturning his boots in my flight. As I passed near the divan, I saw his uniform spread out for use—he was to visit the General that morning. I seized the "czapska," which I employed as a shield. But I was paralyzed by an attack of foolish laughter, and, moreover, what could a poor, weak little woman do when attacked by a captain of the Lancers, even if provided with a shield?

At last he reached me. The struggle was terrible. I shrieked aloud, as I fell back upon his sustaining arm, but, nevertheless, the horrible brush, which resembled a great snow ball on the end of a little stick, came nearer and nearer to me!

Thank heaven! he was merciful and contented himself with depositing a little white dot upon the tip of my chin, crying: "The cavalry is avenged!"

But I, seizing the brush in my turn, said to him, coaxingly: "Captain, please, please let me lather your cheek!"

In response he turned his face towards me, and, seeing that I was obliged to stand on tip-toe and lean rather heavily upon his shoulder, he knelt down before me and placed his head at my disposal.

With the end of my finger I made him move his head to the right, to the left, backward and forward, and lathered him wildly, laughing the while ever so heartily. Oh! it amused me so much to see my captain obey me like a child! I would have given almost anything if he had only had his spurs and sword on at this moment. Unhappily, he was in his slippers!

I lathered his forehead, his nose and his cheeks; he closed his eyes and seized me in his arms, saying:

"Go ahead, my little wife, go ahead—only don't put any of it in my mouth—that's all I ask of you!"

But at that moment I experienced a most peculiar sensation; my laughter ceased all at once, and I was heartily ashamed of having my husband on his knees at my feet and of amusing myself with him as if he had been a doll.

"What a silly child I am!" said I to myself; "and how good and kind he is!"

I let the brush fall to the floor; I felt the tears rush to my eyes, and, suddenly melting, I bent over him, kissing him upon the neck, the only spot free from lather.

His ear was so near my lips that, as I passed it, I could not help whispering in it: "Do not be angry with me, my—husband!" And, as my emotion and repentance increased: "I love you," I added, "oh! how I love you!"

"My darling!" he cried, rising suddenly, and his voice trembled.

What delicious moments were those! Unhappily—oh! yes, unhappily—he could not bring his face to mine, covered as it was with lather.

"Wait an instant!" he cried, as he rushed towards a basin of water.

Heavens! how long that instant seemed!

CHAPTER VI.

MY WIFE GOES TO THE BALL.

MADAME. Ah! how good of you to come home so early! (Consulting her watch.) Quarter to six. But you are nearly frozen, my poor dear; your hands are icy! Come, sit down by the fire. (She throws some wood on the fire.) I have thought of you all day long. How wretched to be obliged to go out in such weather! Have you arranged your business satisfactorily?

Monsieur. Very satisfactorily, my little one. (Aside.) I have never before seen my wife so amiable. (Aloud, seizing the bellows.) Very satisfactorily, and I am as hungry as a wolf!

Madame. You are hungry? Oh! how glad I am that you are hungry for once. Bravo! (Calling.) Marie, tell them in the kitchen that Monsieur wishes to dine early. Tell them to take great care of—you know what, and a lemon.

Monsieur. More mysteries, eh?

Madame. Yes, Monsieur; I have prepared you a little surprise, and I flatter myself you will be delighted with it.

Monsieur. Well; we shall see. What is it?

Madame. Oh! it is a real surprise! How curious

you are, and how your eyes sparkle already! Now, suppose I should not tell you what it is?

Monsieur. You would break my heart!

Madame. Well; I don't wish to make you impatient. You shall have, for dinner, this evening, some splendid oysters and—and—a—young partridge! There, am I not thoughtful?

Monsieur. Oysters and a partridge! You are an angel! (He kisses her.) An angel! (Aside.) What is the matter with my wife to-day? (Aloud.) You have not received any visits in the course of the day, have you?

Madame. Ernestine called this morning, but she only remained a second.

Monsieur. And you have seen no one except Ernestine?

Madame. Certainly not. (With an exclamation.) Oh! how thoughtless I am! I forgot Madame de Lyr's visit!

Monsieur. Lord bless her! Does she still laugh on one side of her face only in order to hide her discolored tooth?

Madame. How wicked you are! And yet she is very fond of you. Poor woman! I was really touched by her visit. She came to remind me that her—but you will be angry. (She kisses her husband and draws her chair very near to his.)

Monsieur. Be angry? I be angry? I am no Turk! But come, what is it?

Madame. You know we are to have oysters and a partridge. Let us go to dinner. No; I will not tell you, for you are already in a very bad humor. Moreover, I almost assured her that we would not be there.

Monsieur. (Lifting his hands.) I thought so! The deuce take her and her tea-parties! What on earth have I ever done to that woman, tell me?

Madame. She thought it would please you. She is a charming friend. As to myself, I am very fond of her because she speaks well of you. If you could only have been hidden in this closet during her visit, I know you would have blushed at the praise she showered upon you. (Monsieur shrugs his shoulders.) "Your husband is so amiable," said she, "and so gay, so witty! Do try and coax him to come; I should be so glad to see him." I replied: "Certainly;" but I didn't mean it, you know. Oh! I am not at all anxious to go: it is not so amusing at Madame de Lyr's. There are always so many serious persons there. I know very well that they are influential people, and that they might be very useful to us, but what does that matter to me? Come to dinner. You know that there is still a bottle of that fine old Pomard wine left; I kept it to wash down your partridge. You cannot imagine what pleasure I take in seeing you eat a partridge. You always seem to relish it so very much—you are quite an epicure, my dear husband. (Taking his arm.) Come, now; I hear our little rascal

of a cherub in the dining-room and know he is impatient.

Monsieur. (Seriously.) Hum! And when is it to be?"

Madame. When? What?

Monsieur. The tea-party, of course!"

Madame. Ah! the ball, you mean. I had entirely forgotten it. Madame de Lyr's ball? Why do you ask me that, since we are not going? But come, come; the dinner is getting cold. It will occur this evening.

Monsieur. (Stopping short.) What! this tea-party is a ball, and this ball will occur this evening! This is a strange way to invite one to a ball! One is generally warned in advance!

Madame. She sent us an invitation a week ago. I cannot imagine what has become of the card. I forgot to show it to you.

Monsieur. You forgot it! You forgot it!

Madame. Well, after all, it was for the best; you would have been angry all the week. Sit down, please!

They seat themselves. The cloth is of snowy whiteness, the knives are brilliantly polished, the oysters are fresh and the partridge, cooked in splendid style, emits a delicious odor. Madame is charming and laughs continually. The wrinkles on Monsieur's brow visibly decrease, as he settles himself cosily in his arm-chair.

Monsieur. This old Pomard is very fine. Will you not take some, my little wife?

Madame. Certainly, certainly, your little wife will take some! (She pushes her glass towards her husband, with a coquettish little movement.)

Monsieur. Ah! you have on your Louis XVI. ring, to-day. It is a very stylish ring—very!

Madame. (Displaying her hand to her husband.) Yes, indeed; but look at it, though—one of the stones is loose.

Monsieur. (Kissing his wife's hand.) Yes, this little stone—just here!

Madame. (Smilingly.) You always jest; I speak seriously now—look; do you not see it? (They approach each other, bending their heads over the ring in order to inspect it more thoroughly.) Do you not see it? (She points to one of the stones with her tapering little finger.) Look—there—there.

Monsieur. This little pearl that— But what have you put on your hair, my dear? The odor is delicious. You must give it to the jeweler to— This perfume is of an extreme delicacy. Your curls are very becoming.

Madame. Do you think so? (She arranges her hair with her shapely white hand.) I thought you would like this perfume; If I were you, I—I—

Monsieur. What would you do, my darling? What?

Madame. Why, I should kiss my wife; there!

Monsieur. (Kissing his wife.) Do you know that

your ideas are very good ones, eh? Pass me another slice of partridge, please. (With his mouth full.) How delicious they are, these poor little things! How cunning they look in the long grass! You have heard their little cry when the sun sets, have you not? A little sauce, please. There are moments when the poetry of the fields touches the heart. To think that there are cannibals who eat them with cabbage! Ah! but tell me, (filling his glass,) is your dress ready?

Madame. What dress, my dear?

Monsieur. Why, the dress for Madame de Lyr's ball!

Madame. For the ball! Why, what a memory you have! Are you still thinking of it? No; I have none ready. Ah! yes; I have my tarlatan dress, you know!

Monsieur. The hair-dresser has not been notified, has he?

Madame. No; he has not been notified; moreover, I am not very anxious to attend this ball. We will make ourselves comfortable by the fireside and read a little. But you recall to my mind that Madame de Lyr remarked, on leaving: "Your hair-dresser is also mine; I will give him notice." But how foolish I am! I recollect now that I made no reply. It is not far, however, and I can send Marie to tell him that he need not come.

Monsieur. Ah! well; since the hair-dresser has been notified, let him come, and we will amuse our-

selves awhile at good Madame de Lyr's — but on one condition: that I find my clothes ready for me on the bed; my gloves, too; and you must tie my white cravat!

Madame. Agreed! (She kisses him.) You are the best of husbands! I am charmed, my darling, for I see plainly that you are making a sacrifice to give me pleasure. The ball itself is entirely indifferent to me! I did not care much to go—really, I did not!

Monsieur. Hum! Well, I shall go smoke a cigar in order not to be in your way, and at ten o'clock I shall return. You will be ready by that time, and it will not take me five minutes to disguise myself in black from head to foot. Adieu!

Madame. Au revoir!

Once in the street, Monsieur lights his cigar and buttons his great coat. Two hours to kill! That is a mere trifle when one is occupied, but when one has absolutely nothing to do it is vastly different! The pavement is slippery and large drops of rain begin to fall; happily the Palais-Royal is not far distant. Having made the tour of the galleries for the fourteenth time, Monsieur consults his watch. Five minutes to ten; the husband will be behindtime; he accelerates his pace and enters his house.

The horses and carriage are waiting in the court-yard.

In the bed-room, two shadeless lamps flood the apartment with light. On the bed, chairs and sofa are mountains of muslin and ribbons. Robes, skirts,

underskirts, laces, scarfs, gloves and jewelry commingle, forming a charming chaos. On one of the tables are pots of pomatum, sticks of pomade, hair-pins, combs and brushes, all arranged in perfect order. Two braids of false hair lie upon a heap of dark objects which look not a little like bunches of horse hair. A net of gold thread is also visible. Yellow tortoise-shell and brilliant coral combs, rose-buds to deck the head, bunches of white lilacs and a bouquet of light-colored violets await the choice of the artist or the caprice of beauty. And yet (must I confess it?) amid all these luxurious riches, Madame is restless, Madame is furious.

Monsieur. (Looking at his watch.) Well, my dear, are you ready?

Madame. (Impatiently.) He asks if I am ready! Do you not see that I have been awaiting the hair-dresser for the last hour and a half? Do you not perceive that I am furious because he has not arrived?

Monsieur. The monster!

Madame. Yes, the monster! Go on jesting, of course!

A knock is heard. The door is opened and the waiting-maid cries: "Madame, it is he!"

Madame. It is he!

Monsieur. It is he!

The artist enters precipitately, bows and rolls up his sleeves.

Madame. Silvani, you are intolerable!

Silvani. I am very sorry, but it was impossible for

me to get here any sooner. I have been dressing hair ever since three o'clock this afternoon. I have just left the Duchesse de W——, who is going to the Minister's this evening. She sent me back in her coupé. Lisette, give me Madame's combs and place the irons in the fire.

Madame. But, Silvani, my waiting-maid's name is not Lisette.

Silvani. Madame will readily understand that, if it were necessary for me to recollect the name of every waiting-maid who assists me, I should be compelled to have six clerks instead of four. Lisette is a pretty name and applicable to any waiting-maid. Lisette, show me Madame's toilet. Thanks. Is this an official ball?

Madame. Never mind about that, Silvani; only dress my hair.

Silvani. It is impossible for me to dress Madame's hair without knowing for what kind of an occasion. (To her husband who is sitting in the corner.) May I ask Monsieur to sit elsewhere? I must have room to step back and judge of the effect.

Monsieur. Certainly, Monsieur Silvani; I am only too happy to serve you. (He is about to sit down upon a chair.)

Madame. (Precipitately.) Not there, my dear; you will rumple my skirt. (Her husband arises and seeks another seat.) Look behind you, please; you are walking upon my puffs.

Monsieur. (Looking back rather crossly.) Her puffs! her puffs!

Madame. There, I knew it; you have upset my hair-pins!

Silvani. May I beg Madame to remain quiet for a few moments?

Monsieur. Come, be calm; I will go down into the parlor; is there a fire there?

Madame. (Vacantly.) How can you expect to find a fire in the parlor?

Monsieur. Then I shall go into my study.

Madame. There is none there, either. How can you expect to find a fire in your study? Rather high, you know, Silvani, and some disorder—that's all the rage.

Silvani. Will Madame place a dot of Polish brown beneath her eye? That will enable me to idealize her head-dress!

Monsieur. (Impatiently.) Marie, hand me my overcoat and hat, please. I will walk up and down in the ante-chamber. (Aside.) Madame de Lyr shall pay for this!

Silvani. (Crimping.) I shall leave Madame's ear exposed to view; it would be a great pity to cover it. Madame's ear strikingly resembles that of the Princesse de K——, whose hair I dressed yesterday. Lisette, prepare the powder.

Madame's hair is dressed at last. Silvani gives a slight touch of powder to her face, upon which he casts a final glance of admiration; then he bows and retires.

As he passes through the ante-chamber, he comes in collision with Monsieur.

Silvani. Oh! a thousand pardons!

Monsieur. (From beneath the turned-up collar of his overcoat.) Good-night.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, the rumbling of a carriage is heard. Madame is ready; her head-dress is very becoming and she smiles in the glass as she forces her glove-sticks into the fingers of her long, narrow gloves. Monsieur has forgotten to tie his cravat and torn off three buttons. Traces of intense ill-humor are visible on his countenance.

Monsieur. Come, come; the carriage is waiting for us; it is a quarter past eleven. (Aside.) Another sleepless night! Give the horses the whip, driver. No. 224, Rue de la Pépinière.

They reach their destination. The Rue de la Pépinière is in intense excitement. Sergents de Ville are passing rapidly through the crowd. In the distance are heard the rumbling of approaching wheels and confused cries. Monsieur addresses the coachman from the carriage window.

Monsieur. What is the matter, Jean?

Coachman. A fire, Monsieur. The engines are coming.

Monsieur. Drive on to No. 224.

Coachman. We are there, Monsieur, but the house is on fire!

The Concierge of the House. (Forcing his way

through the crowd and approaching the carriage.) Monsieur wishes to stop at Madame de Lyr's, doubtless? Madame is in despair; but her house is on fire and it is impossible for her to receive company.

Madame. (Excitedly.) It is an insult!

Monsieur. (Humming an air.) Distressing! distressing! (To the driver.) Drive back again as fast as you can.

CHAPTER VII.

A FALSE ALARM.

EVERY time I go to Paris, and I am, unfortunately, compelled to go there only too often, it rains in torrents. In vain I change the hour of departure, stop on the road, travel at night and employ, in fine, a thousand cunning artifices to deceive the barometer. When I get within ten leagues of Paris, the storm-clouds gather and pour their floods upon the devoted city.

On my last visit there, I found myself, as usual, in the middle of the street, followed by a porter who carried my baggage and making desperate signs to every cab that passed, in the midst of a most penetrating rain. After about ten minutes of this sort of thing, a driver, more sensible than the others and protected by the folds of a heavy coat, stopped his horses. With a bound, I was at the carriage-door, which I opened in no very good humor, and precipitated myself into the vehicle.

Unfortunately, as I was doing this, another gentleman, finding himself in the same position as myself, opened the opposite door and precipitated himself into the cab, exactly as I had done. It is easy to understand that the result of this proceeding was a shock, followed by a short explanation.

"The deuce take you!" cried my rival, preparing to enter further into the cab.

I was on the point of replying to this salutation, and rather sharply, too, for I am from the south and have a quick temper, when our eyes met. We stared at each other a moment, like two lions beside the same sheep, and then suddenly burst into loud laughter. This furious gentleman was Oscar V——, the good, dear Oscar, whom I had not seen for the last ten years and whom I love infinitely; a very charming fellow, with whom I had played when we were children.

We embraced, and the driver, who had been watching us through the window, shrugged his shoulders and comprehended nothing. The two porters stood, one at each door, in the penetrating rain, with the luggage on their backs. The trunks were deposited on the rack of the carriage, and the driver was ordered to take us to the Hôtel du Louvre, whither Oscar wished me to accompany him.

"But are you also travelling?" asked I of my old comrade, after the first moment of effusion. "Are you not living in Paris at present?"

"As little as possible, and, as you see me, I have just arrived from Roches, an old tower left me by my father in which I reside the greater part of the year. Oh! it is not a château. It is rustic, rural, you know; but I am very fond of the country and would not have it otherwise for the world. The land all around it is charmingly green; not fifty steps from the house, in the

midst of grand old trees, runs a transparent little stream; in the valley beneath stands an ancient mill; in the distance is a church-tower with a weather-cock; flowers are in the windows and happiness is in the house. Should I not, then, be contented? My wife makes me superb tarts, which are very agreeable to the taste and render her little hands whiter. But I have never told you that I was married, have I? My dear fellow, the fact is I met an angel and very sensibly concluded that, if I allowed her to vanish, I should never meet another. I acted wisely. But I must introduce you to my wife. When will you come to see us? It's only a three hours ride from Paris—just time enough to smoke a couple of cigars. Then, it's understood. I shall return home to-morrow morning and will have your room prepared. Give me your memorandum book that I may write my address in it."

All this was said in so cordial a manner that I could not resist the entreaties of my friend, and I promised to visit him as soon as possible.

Three or four days later, being rather weary of Paris and the remembrance of my old comrade pursuing me, I conceived a great desire to witness his conjugal happiness and see, with my own eyes, the beauties of a landscape which pleased him so marvellously well.

I arrived at Roches about six o'clock in the evening, and was charmed by the first glance. Oscar's dwelling was a pretty little château, in the style of Louis XV., hidden amid a host of gigantic old trees; it was

fantastic and irregular in construction, but very charming and picturesque. For the last hundred years, every trifling detail of the building had been carefully respected, and everything, from the blackish mansards to the antiquated weather-cocks, from the arched windows with their little squares of stained glass to the elaborately carved escutcheon over the door, was of the same style. The wrinkled and motionless old chestnut trees stretched their branches over the thick and, in some places, slightly settled tiles of the roof. Bitter-sweet and climbing-roses twined at will through the interstices in the shutters, enframed the arched windows, forced their way through the dormers and, clinging to the rain-spouts, let fall from above large clusters of blossoms which the wind agitated. Amid the pointed roofs, later additions to the original structure, and this profusion of verdure and immense trees, it was with difficulty that one could catch a glimpse of the blue sky in one or two places.

The first person I saw was my friend Oscar, dressed in white from head to foot, wearing a straw hat, and sitting on an immense stone, which seemed a part of the building itself. He appeared to be very deeply interested in examining a fine melon, which his gardener had just brought him. As soon as he perceived me, he sprang up and grasped my hand with such an expression of good humor, frankness and affection that I said to myself: "Oh! surely he has not deceived me; he is really happy!" I found him the same as I

had known him in his boyhood: gay and somewhat foolish, but kind-hearted and affable.

"Pierre," said he to the gardener, "carry Monsieur's baggage to the chamber on the ground floor." And, as the man proceeded slowly to raise the trunk, Oscar seized it with his own hands and placed it upon the shoulders of the poor fellow, whose back bent beneath the burden.

"Old man!" cried Oscar, laughing heartily, "now let me present you to the little queen! My wife, where is my wife?"

He ran to the bell and rang it twice. A very stout cook, with a red face and sleeves rolled back, made her appearance immediately at one of the windows on the ground floor, and just behind her was another servant in the act of wiping a plate. Had these good people been chosen expressly? I know not; but their bearing and aspect completed the picture so harmoniously that I could not suppress a smile.

"Where is Madame?" asked Oscar, and, not receiving a sufficiently prompt reply: "Marie!" he cried, "Marie! here is George; here is my friend!"

At a little narrow window on the second floor, about which the blossoms clustered thickest, appeared a young woman as fair as the golden wheat. She wore a white wrapper of a very peculiar cut which it is impossible for me to describe. With one hand she gathered up the flowing folds of this robe and with the other held her long, loose hair. No sooner had she

perceived me than she blushed to the temples, ashamed, doubtless, of being surprised in the midst of her toilet, and, saluting me in the most awkward and adorable manner, vanished precipitately. This apparition completed the charm; it seemed to me as if I had been suddenly transported into the realm of the most delightful fantasy. I had expected to find Oscar installed in one of those neat little houses with green shutters and gilded lightning-rods, of which the rusticating Parisian is so fond, and I found myself in an ideal confusion of good old moss-covered stones hidden amid flowers, of antiquated gables and whimsical gratings reddened with rust. It was the realization of one of those pretty designs by my friend Morin, and, astounded and fascinated, I remained for several moments with my eyes fixed upon the little embowered window at which the beautiful fairy had appeared to me.

"I call her the little queen," said Oscar, taking my arm; "it is my wife. Come this way and we shall meet a cousin of mine, who is fishing, and two other persons, who are taking a walk down there—very good friends, all of them, only they do not understand rusticating as I do. They wear red silk stockings and dancing-pumps—but that does not concern you, does it? Do you want a pair of slippers, my friend? Will you have a straw hat? I trust you have brought your linen clothes. I shall not offer you a glass of Madeira now, because dinner will be ready in an instant. Ah!

old man, you have arrived just in time; we are going to cut the first melon of the year to-night!"

"Unhappily, I never eat melons, but I like to see others enjoy them."

"Well, then, I will console you with a bottle of my old Pomard. Between ourselves, I do not offer it to every visitor; it is an excellent wine which my father recommended to me on his death-bed. Poor father! But what I tell you is true," said Oscar, earnestly: "The morning of the day on which he left us, he could scarcely whisper—poor father! His eyes were closed and his head had fallen back on the pillows. I was sitting beside the bed, my hand in his, when I felt his grasp tighten feebly. His eyes partly opened, and I saw him smile. He said to me in that weak, slow and faltering voice of dying old men: 'The Pomard in the vault—to the left—you know, my boy?—for your friends—good friends—only!' He pressed my hand again, and his eyes closed as if from exhaustion. I could see that he still smiled by the slight movement of his lips. Come into the cellar with me," continued Oscar, after a brief silence, "into the vault to the left. You must hold the lantern for me."

As we made our exit from the cellar, the dinner-bell was ringing gayly and frightening clouds of sparrows from the old chestnut trees. All the guests met in the garden. Oscar presented me in his amiable, careless way, and I offered my arm to the mistress of the house to enter the dining-room where the steaming soup awaited us.

On closely observing my friend's wife, I saw that my first impression had not deceived me: she was a little angel to the very letter, and, what is better, a woman too. She was delicate and slender as a young girl; her little, ringing, harmonious voice, like the song of the finch, was characterized by I know not what indescribable accent common to no country, but which gave an extreme charm to her every word. She had, moreover, her own peculiar manner of expressing herself and a childish way of modulating the end of her phrases, turning her eyes the while towards her husband as if to seek his approbation. She blushed every moment, but, at the same time, her smile was so cunning and her teeth so pearly white that she seemed to be making fun of herself and, perhaps, of her neighbors too. The singular little woman! Add to this a peculiar but very charming style of dress, somewhat original, it is true, but strangely becoming this little queen, so strange herself. Her beautiful flaxen hair, braided negligently — it looked as if it had been braided negligently, at least — was retained in a sufficiently elevated position by a steel comb, worn very coquettishly a little on one side. Her white muslin robe, trimmed with large, flat quillings, low and square-cut in the neck, and her skirts, short and raised at the sides, emitted one of those delicious perfumes common to the eighteenth century. This little angel was somewhat of a coquette, but in her own manner, and her manner was exquisite.

Hardly were we seated at table, when Oscar cast upon his little queen a rapid glance, but one so full of happiness and—of love—why not say it?—that I experienced a sort of trembling, caused by envy, astonishment and admiration, perhaps. He plucked a red rose-bud from a beautiful bouquet upon the board and smilingly offered it to his wife:

"For your hair, Madame," said he.

The fascinating beauty blushed deeply, accepting the flower, and, without ado, quickly, with great address, placed it in her hair, rather high on the left side and just in the right position; then, turning gayly towards us, she said, with a merry laugh:

"Is it becoming there?"

Then, with the tips of her fingers, she threw her gallant husband a little kiss, exactly as a girl of twelve would have done, and gracefully plunged the ladle into the soup, elevating her little-finger in the air.

There was nothing very remarkable in the appearance of the other guests; they laughed at all this childishness with great benevolence and seemed rather out of place in the midst of the adorable abandon. The cousin, with almond-shaped eyes, who had been fishing and was now dressed very carefully in a suit of white, his neck encircled by a blue cravat and his beard parted in the middle, particularly displeased me. He rolled his *r*'s and hissed his *s*'s like a provincial actor. He broke his bread in very small pieces which he munched while he spoke. I saw that a desire

to exhibit a large ring which he wore on his finger had a great deal to do with this mania for breaking bread. Once or twice, I noticed that he cast a melancholy glance towards the mistress of the house, but, at first, I attached no great importance to this, being very much amused by the sparkling gayety of my friend Oscar.

It seemed to me, however, at the expiration of a few moments, that the young man was endeavoring by a thousand devices to attract the attention of the little queen.

But the latter replied to him in the most natural manner possible, evincing neither constraint nor embarrassment.

I was wrong, doubtless!

Have you ever remarked, after having been ushered suddenly into the midst of a company, with whose members you are unacquainted, that certain trifling details, unobserved by the rest, assume considerable importance in your eyes? The first impression is based upon a host of little nothings, which fall immediately under your observation. A certain spot upon the ceiling, a certain nail in the wall, or a certain detail in the physiognomy of your neighbor impresses itself forcibly upon your memory, and, in spite of yourself, all your other observations group themselves about this spot, this nail or this expression and add to its importance. Think over this, dear reader, and you will find that each opinion you may have formed in

regard to a person or a thing has been sensibly modified by the recollection of these little nothings by which your attention was, at first, attracted. Where is the young girl, who, falling a victim to such first impressions, has not refused a husband or two on account of an ill-fitting vest, a badly tied cravat, an awkward sneeze, a foolish smile or a too pointed boot?

One will not acknowledge, even to himself, that such nonsense may guide him in the formation of an opinion, and it is necessary to search one's mind thoroughly in order to discover these forgotten and unavowed little germs.

I recollect perfectly that the first time I had the honor of visiting Madame de M——, I noticed the color of one of her teeth, the first molar to the right: it was absolutely blue—an ugly dark blue. I never could see anything about Madame de M—— afterwards but this little blue monster, and, although she took great care to conceal it, the recollection of the discovery never faded from my mind. I soon noticed that Madame de M—— twisted her face horribly in order to hide her tooth, and that she took excessively small bites when eating that she might deal gently with the nervous susceptibility of the little monster.

With the aid of this tooth, I succeeded in explaining, to my own satisfaction, at least, all Madame de M——'s peculiarities, and she was personified so completely in my mind by this slight infirmity that, although the blue molar has been replaced by a mag-

nificent substitute, twice as large and as white as the plate from which she eats, even now, I say, Madame de M—— never opens her mouth in my presence that my eyes do not instinctively search for the little blue horror!

But let us return to our subject.

Gazing upon this beautiful picture of conjugal felicity, so charmingly framed, and sitting opposite to my dear Oscar, so good, so trusting and so enamored of this little cherub in a Louis XV. robe, who carried grace and simplicity to the point of strangeness, I had been shocked by the too well combed hair and foolishly pretty face of the cousin in white. This person's beard had attracted my attention in the manner of the spot on the ceiling of which I have just spoken, or, rather, in the manner of Madame de M——'s blue molar, and, in spite of myself, I kept my eyes riveted upon this fisherman, as he plunged the silver blade of his knife into a slice of that indigestible fruit, which I am very fond of seeing others enjoy, but which I cannot tolerate myself.

After the dinner, which was of infinite duration, we went into the garden, where coffee and cigars were served, and where we sat blissfully watching the blue smoke issue from our lips. Everything around us was silent and calm; the insects had ceased their music, and athwart the clear sky were stretched narrow bands of long purple clouds, motionless and seemingly plunged in slumber.

With a wave of the hand and a happy smile, Oscar pointed out to me the old mill, the quiet valley and, further away, his darling streamlet, upon the surface of which the last rays of the setting sun were kissing the pale water-lilies. During this time, the lively little queen was busying herself with the cups and saucers, like an infant playing with a toy dinner-set, and, with a thousand comical and charming precautions, was pouring out the steaming coffee. The delicious odor of the mocha mingled with the perfume of the flowers, the trees and the new-mown hay.

When she had finished, she sat down near her husband, so very near that the folds of her robe half concealed him from view, and, taking the cigar from between his lips, held it at a distance from her, with a little grimace which plainly said: "Oh! horrors!" Then, extending her little-finger, she struck the white ashes which fell to the ground, at which she laughed merrily, at the same time replacing the cigar in her husband's mouth which he held towards her in expectation.

It was charming. Oscar was, doubtless, accustomed to such proceedings, for he seemed in nowise astonished; he placed his hand upon his wife's shoulder as one does with a child and said, "Thank you," as he kissed her forehead.

"Yes; but you will give me a duck, will you not?" said the little queen, in a very low tone, as she rested her hand upon her husband's arm.

I could not suppress a smile on beholding so much coaxing artlessness, grace and childishness. I cannot imagine why I cast my eye towards the cousin, who, at some distance from the rest, was smoking in silence. His face seemed to me a trifle pale. One after the other, he inhaled three or four whiffs of smoke, then arose precipitately, evidently disturbed, and vanished among the trees.

"What is the matter with my cousin?" said Oscar, with a show of interest. "What has come over him?"

"I cannot imagine," replied his wife, in the most natural manner in the world; "he has gone fishing, perhaps!"

And the conversation went on.

It began to grow dark; we had, as I have said, remained very long at table. It was about nine o'clock. The cousin returned and resumed his former position; but from this moment there seemed to enter into our relations a sort of strange, mutual constraint, manifested by a singular coldness. The conversation, so animated at first, grew dull little by little, and, in spite of all my efforts, it dragged miserably. As to myself, my mind was by no means at ease; I was haunted by the most absurd ideas in the world; I beheld in the sudden departure of the cousin, in his paleness and his embarrassed movements, the expression of a violent feeling which he could not conceal. But why did not this adorable little woman, so intelligent and with so cunning a glance, understand all this,

when it was so plain to me? Had not Oscar, trustful as he was, noticed that the cousin's departure coincided, in point of time, exactly with the kiss he had impressed upon his wife's forehead? Were these two people blind, were they feigning not to see, or was I myself the sport of a miserable illusion? And yet the conversation had ceased; the mistress of the house —a very singular symptom—had grown silent and grave, and Oscar was restless in his chair, as if tormented by a thought he was afraid to express in words.

What was passing in the souls of these persons?

The clock in the parlor soon struck ten, and Oscar, rising suddenly, said:

"My dear friends, we enjoy entire liberty in the country, you know; I shall, therefore, beg your permission to retire, as I am rather fatigued this evening. George," he continued, turning towards me, "you will be shown your apartment; it is on the ground floor; I trust you will have a good night's rest."

All arose in silence and, after having wished each other good-night with a constrained air, sought their apartments. I thought, I confess it, that they retired rather too early at my friend's. I had not the faintest desire to sleep; I, therefore, examined my room and found it charming. It was hung with ancient tapestries, representing various personages, which were surrounded by gray-hued wood-work. The bed, hidden behind ample curtains, was half open and emitted that refreshing odor of recently washed linen which invites

repose. On the table, a small ornament dating from the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI., were four or five books, evidently chosen by Oscar and placed there for me. Such little attentions are never lost upon any one, and, very naturally, my mind wandered back to my friend, the strange scenes in the dining-room and garden, and the chagrin and tortures probably concealed beneath this appearance of happiness. I was absurd that evening; I already pitied my poor friend; my heart was touched with sorrow and full of melancholy, and I leaned my elbows upon the sill of the open window.

The night was superb; the moon had just risen and the sky was clearness itself. Whiffs of delicious perfume were wafted to me from the flowers in the garden. Amid the shadows cast by the trees I saw glow-worms shining in the grass, and over masses of verdure, mysteriously illuminated by the moonlight, I beheld strange forms of fantastic monsters and phantoms wandering in the silence. But what interested me most was a little pointed roof, surmounted by a weather-cock, nestling in the midst of grand old trees. In the gloom, I could distinguish neither windows nor doors in this strange tower. Was it an old aviary, a tomb, or an abandoned kiosk? I knew not, but there was about it a grace, an extreme elegance that riveted my gaze. Was it chance or the hand of a cunning artist that had entwined this little tower with climbing plants and flowers, and surrounded it with

verdure so coquettishly that it seemed to be hiding in order to attract attention? I was in deep contemplation of all this, when I heard a slight noise among the trees. Turning my eyes in the direction of the sound —oh! I could feel my heart throb violently!—I saw a phantom in a long white robe walking rapidly, excitedly and mysteriously. At a turn of the path, the moon fell on the face of this phantom. It was impossible to doubt: my eyes were upon my friend's wife. Her bearing was no longer characterized by that coquettish freedom which I had so much admired, and on her features traces of trouble and emotion were visible. I did my best to banish the horrible suspicion which suddenly presented itself to my mind. "No," said I to myself, "so much candor and beauty must be foreign to deception; no doubt, she has forgotten her fan or her embroidery on one of the chairs in the garden." But, instead of directing her steps towards the chairs which were at her right, the young woman turned to the left and disappeared in the shadow of the grove in which was hidden the mysterious kiosk.

My heart was filled with sadness. "Where is the unhappy woman going?" I muttered. "Let her, at least, have no suspicion that she is observed!" And I extinguished the lamp precipitately. I wished to close my window, retire and see no more, but irresistible curiosity nailed me to the spot. I had stood there but a few moments when I plainly distinguished the sound of footsteps upon the gravel. They were irregular and

timid footsteps. I could see no one, at first, but I doubted not that they were the footsteps of a man. I soon knew that I was not deceived, for the elongated shadow of the cousin, clearly and distinctly defined, fell upon the coppice. I wished to arrest his progress, for his intention was evident: he was going towards the grove in which the little queen had disappeared. I wished to cry out to him: "Scoundrel, not one step further, or—" But had I the right to act thus? I remained silent, but coughed loudly enough to be heard by him.

He stopped suddenly and looked in every direction with visible anxiety; then, seized by I know not what frenzy, he darted towards the pavilion. I was stupefied! What was to be done? Should I warn my friend, my comrade of boyhood? Yes; but I hesitated to cast despair into the heart of that excellent man and proclaim this horrible scandal! "He might be kept in ignorance of it," said I to myself; "and, perhaps, I am mistaken; who knows? This rendezvous is due, doubtless, to the most natural motive in the world." I was trying to nurse this illusion, to close my eyes to the evidence before them, when, suddenly, one of the doors was opened with a crash, and Oscar, Oscar himself, in all the disorder of his night garments, his hair streaming and his wrapper floating in the breeze, passed my window. He ran rather than walked, but the agony of his heart was only too clearly depicted upon his features and in the strangeness of his movements.

He knew all! I felt that a catastrophe was inevitable! "This, then, is the happiness, this the poison enclosed in this beautiful vase!" All these thoughts rushed through my mind with lightning rapidity. But, above all, it was imperative to retard the explosion, if only for a second, and, beside myself, without taking time to think what I should say to him, I cried, in a commanding tone:

"Oscar, my friend, come speak with me; I wish it."

He stood for a moment as if petrified. He was horribly pale.

"I have no time now; later," said he.

"Oscar, I implore you; you are mistaken, doubtless!"

"I am mistaken, man, mistaken?"

And he rushed towards the pavilion.

But, seizing the skirt of his wrapper, I held him with an iron grasp:

"Do not go there, my friend; I implore you upon my knees!"

The only response I received was a terrible blow on the arm, and he cried:

"You must be out of your senses!"

"I say you shall not go there, Oscar!" cried I in a determined tone of voice.

"And I say that go there I will!" fairly shouted my friend.

With these words he tore his wrapper from my grasp and vanished, leaving me a prey to fearful anxiety.

I waited for some moments, expecting to hear the noise of a deadly struggle; but the silence of the night remained undisturbed, and at last I retired to my couch in a state of utter perplexity and bewilderment.

It was not until the afternoon of the next day that the mystery was explained. Then, Oscar laughingly informed me that all who had partaken of the melon had been seized with the colic in the night, and, one by one, not wishing to disturb the others, had gone to the pavilion, which was used as a coach-house, in order to obtain relief by dosing themselves with some old brandy which was temporarily stored there.

CHAPTER VIII.

I SUP WITH MY WIFE.

IT was Christmas-eve. The cold was intense and the snow fell in huge flakes, which, driven by the wind, dashed against the window-panes. The chiming of distant bells reached us in confused and feeble tinklings, through the heavy, downy atmosphere. The passers-by, wrapped in their great coats and bending their heads beneath the beating storm, strode along with rapid steps.

Comfortably enveloped in my wrapper, I drummed on the window-pane and smiled upon the chilled pedestrians, the wind and the snow, with the happy air of a man who is established in a warm apartment and whose feet are encased in soft slippers which sink in a thick carpet.

Beside the fire sat my wife, busily engaged in cutting and clipping cloth, and smiling on me from time to time; a new book was awaiting me on the mantel-piece, and on the hearth the burning logs hissed and shot forth bright little blue flames.

"There is nothing more stupid than a man who will plod through such a storm, is there?" said I to my wife.

"Hush!" said she, putting down the scissors. Then,

stroking her chin with her tapering, rosy and plump little fingers, she began to examine the pieces of cloth upon which she was at work.

"I say that there is nothing more absurd than to plod through such a storm, when it is so easy to remain at home, beside the fire!"

"Hush!"

"What, in the name of goodness, are you doing which is of so much importance?"

"I — I am making a pair of braces for you."

She bent anew over her work, and I stepped behind her and kissed her on the cheek.

"Monsieur!" cried Louise, suddenly turning towards me.

"Madame!" replied I, and both of us laughed heartily.

"It is Christmas-eve, you know."

"Does Monsieur ask pardon?"

"Does Madame complain?"

"Yes; Madame complains that Christmas-eve produces no greater effect upon Monsieur. The chimes of Notre-Dame are indifferent to you, and, a few moments ago, as the magic lantern passed under the window, I saw you pretend to be occupied—you were unconcerned."

"I was unconcerned when the magic lantern passed! Ah! my dear, you judge me very severely!"

"Oh! yes, joke on! But it is, nevertheless, true that the souvenirs of your childhood are effaced from your memory!"

"What, my darling, do you wish me to hang my stocking by the chimney before I retire, to-night? Do you wish me to call in the man with the lantern and hunt him up a sheet and a candle-end, as my poor mother used to do? I can still see her as she confided her fine linen to his care. 'Please do not tear it, at least,' she used to say. How we clapped our little hands in the mysterious obscurity! Oh! I recollect all those joys of my childhood, darling, but you should understand that hosts of others have arisen since then! Greater pleasures have effaced those of infancy!"

"Yes, I understand: the pleasures of your youth; and I am sure that this is the first Christmas-eve you have ever passed by your fireside, in your wrapper, without having feasted—for, you know, you did feast!"

"I feasted?—I feasted?"

"Yes; I will wager that you used to feast!"

"I may have feasted two or three times, perhaps — I cannot now recollect—with a few friends, you know—on two sous' worth of chestnuts, and—"

"A glass of eau sucrée!"

"Oh! well; something of the kind. It was all quite simple and had a very good effect upon the others!"

"And you can say that with a straight face! You have never mentioned any of those simple pleasures to me!"

"But, my dear, what I say is true to the letter. I recollect, however, that on one occasion the feast was rather lively. We were at Ernest's, who favored us

with music. Will you push that wood over here? No; you need not trouble yourself; it is nearly midnight and time for all reasonable people to retire."

(Louise, rising and putting her arms about my neck.) "But I don't want to be reasonable; I want to efface from your memory all those recollections of chestnuts and eau sucrée!"

Then, forcing me into my study, she locked the door.

"My dear, what is the matter with you, this evening?" I cried through the key-hole.

"I only ask ten minutes—not a second longer. Your newspaper is on the table; you did not read it to-night. You will find a few matches on the mantel-piece."

I soon heard the rattle of plates and the rustling of silk. Was my wife out of her senses?

Louise speedily opened the door.

"Do not scold me for having locked you in," said she, embracing me. "See how pretty I have made myself. Do you not recognize the head-dress of which you are so fond? But one must appear in full uniform when one sups with a superior officer!"

"Sup? What do you mean?"

"Exactly what I say: I intend to sup with you; do you not see my illumination and this table covered with a host of delicacies and flowers? I had prepared all this in the alcove; but, you understand, in order to roll the table beside the fire and make my toilet, I wished to be alone for a few moments. Here is some fine old Chambertin. Come, Monsieur, be seated. I

am as hungry as a wolf. May I offer you some cold chicken?"

"Your idea is an adorable one, my little darling; but really I am ashamed—I am in my wrapper!"

"Take it off, if it bothers you, Monsieur, but do not force me to hold out this chicken wing to you all night. I wish to wait on you myself." And, rising, she placed her napkin under her arm and rolled up her sleeves to the elbow.

"That is what the waiters at the restaurant do, is it not?"

"Exactly; but, waiter, permit me to kiss your hand!"

"I have not time," said she, laughing and forcing the corkscrew into the neck of the bottle. "Chambertin!—that's a very pretty name; and, then, you recollect that before our marriage—gracious! how this cork sticks—you told me you loved good old Chambertin because it reminded you of one of Alfred de Musset's poems—which, by the way, you have never given me to read. Do you see those two little Bohemian glasses? I purchased them expressly for this evening. Come, we will drink each other's health from them, and then hide them until this time next year! They shall be our Christmas-eve glasses! Every year, we will banquet thus before the fire until extreme old age comes on."

"But how shall we manage when we have lost all our teeth?"

"We will sup on broth, and it will be none the less charming! I will take another piece of chicken, if you please—a little jelly with it. Thank you."

As she held her plate towards me, I saw her beautiful arm, covered with lace.

"Why do you stare at my sleeves, instead of devouring your chicken?"

"I was admiring your arm, my dear. Do you know that you are delightful, this evening, eh? Your head-dress is so becoming, and I have never seen this dress before!"

"When one marches to conquest, one must be properly equipped!"

"You are superb, darling!"

"But do you really consider me—charming, this evening? Well, then, if you do—(casting down her eyes and smiling upon her bracelet) if you do—I cannot see why—"

"What can't you see, my little one?"

"I cannot see why you do not come and—kiss me just a little bit!"

And, as I kissed her, she cried, in the midst of her laughter, throwing back her head and exposing a double row of pearly teeth: "I want some pâté! some pâté! Oh! you will break my Bohemian glass, the fruit of my economy! You always hurt me, when you kiss me! Do you recollect how you tore my dress at Madame de Brill's ball, a few days before our marriage, as we waltzed in the little parlor?"

"The result of trying to do two things at once: to dance in time and kiss your partner!"

"I recollect that when mamma asked me who tore my dress, I blushed to the temples. And Madame D——, that yellow old witch, cried, with her peculiar lenten smile: 'What a very high color you have, this evening, my dear child!' I could have strangled her! I said I had torn my dress on a nail in the door! And I took a sly glance at you; you pulled your moustache and looked terribly vexed. You are eating all the truffles, which is very kind in you!"

"I am distressed, my dear; I forgot you liked them!"

"You are as forgetful as at the Town Hall, where I was forced to nudge you in order to make you answer 'yes' to the benevolent words of the magistrate."

"Benevolent?"

"Yes, benevolent! The magistrate was charming. He could not have been more graceful than when he said: 'Mademoiselle, do you consent to accept as your husband this wretched man at your side?' (Her mouth full, and laughing.) Oh! I so wished to reply: 'Let it be understood, Monsieur the Mayor, that there are a few pro's and con's to be taken into consideration!' But I am strangling! (She laughs heartily.) I did wrong in not making restrictions. Your health, my dear husband; I was only joking. I said 'yes' with all my heart and soul, I assure you, dearest, and I felt that the word was altogether too weak! (In a

low voice.) But, tell me truly, do you regret having married me?"

(Laughing.) "Certainly!" (Kissing her.)

"Dearest, it is two o'clock in the morning! The fire is out, and I am a little—you will not laugh? Well, then, I am a little—giddy!"

"Splendid pâté, wasn't it?"

"Splendid! We will take a little cup of tea for breakfast to-morrow, will we not?"

CHAPTER IX.

FROM ONE THING TO ANOTHER.

(AUTUMN in the country. The wind howls without. Madame is seated in a large arm-chair by the fireside, knitting. Monsieur is seated opposite Madame, contemplating the fire. A long silence.)

Monsieur. Will you hand me the tongs, my dear?

Madame. (Singing.) "And yet in spite of all my fears—" (Spoken.) Here are the tongs. (Singing.) "In spite of painful—"

Monsieur. That's one of Méhul's songs, is it not? Ah! what music he wrote! I saw Delaunay-Riquier in "Joseph." (Singing, as he stirs the fire.) "Holy anguish—" (Spoken.) Why don't the fire blaze? Ah! the wood is green! Riquier had a charming voice, but he was a little too stout.

Madame. (After having held her work at a distance to judge of the effect.) Tell me, George, would you make this little square red or black? You see, this one near the corner. Tell me frankly.

Monsieur (Singing.) "If repentance should—" (Speaking, without looking at his wife's work.) Red, my dear, red; I would not hesitate a moment—I hate black!

Madame. Yes; but that would drive me to—" (She reflects.)

Monsieur. Well, if it would drive you, my dear, you must take a firm hold on something and stick!

Madame. Come, George, I speak seriously; you know very well that if this little square is red the other cannot remain violet; and then the rose leaves would look pale and the background lack color. But I would not change the violet for anything in the world!

Monsieur. (Slowly and gravely.) My dear, will you follow blindly the advice of the irreproachable man to whose existence you have attached your fate? If so, make it apple-green, and say no more about it. Did you ever see such a fire as this!

Madame. I should be only too glad to use my apple-green worsted; I have a whole mountain of it.

Monsieur. Where, then, is the difficulty?

Madame. The difficulty is that apple-green is not—sufficiently religious!

Monsieur. Hum! (Singing). "Holy anguish—" (Spoken.) Will you hand me the bellows, please? Would it be impertinent for me to ask you why this poor apple-green, which seems to be indicative of absolutely nothing, should enjoy such a wretched reputation? Are you knitting something religious?

Madame. Oh! George, I beseech you, spare me your jests; I know them of old, and they are horribly disagreeable to me. I am simply making a little rug

for the confessional of our Curé. There—are you satisfied? And, now that you know all about it, you should understand that apple-green would be out of place.

Monsieur. Not the least in the world; I pledge you my word of honor that I would not hesitate to confess with my feet resting upon an apple-green rug—but then I am naturally resolute, it is true. Use your worsted; I assure you that the good Curé will accept any color. He was never known to refuse a gift! (He whistles energetically.)

Madame. You are satisfied now, I suppose?

Monsieur. Satisfied, my dear?

Madame. Yes, satisfied; since you have vented your sarcasm and ridiculed one who is absent. You are a dangerous man, for you seek to shake the faith of all around you. I must, indeed, be possessed of an ardent belief and very firm principles to have resisted, thus far, your incessant attacks! Why do you stare at me in that manner?

Monsieur. I am endeavoring to become a convert, my little apostle! You are so charming when you speak in that way; your eyes sparkle, your voice vibrates and your gestures are capital. Could you talk very long thus? Say yes! (He kisses her hand, then grasps two of her long curls and ties them together under her chin.) You are superb, darling!

Madame. Oh! you think you have imposed silence upon me by interrupting me! There—you have

tangled my hair again. Heavens! how aggravating you are! It will take me an hour to get those curls untangled. You are not satisfied with being a prodigy of impiety; you must also tangle my hair! Here, stretch out your hands and hold this skein of worsted!

Monsieur. (Drawing a stool as near as possible to Madame, sitting upon it and holding out his hands.) Go ahead, my little St. John!

Madame. Not so near, George, not so near. (She laughs in spite of herself.) What a foolish fellow you are! Do behave yourself! Oh! you are breaking my worsted!

Monsieur. Your religious worsted?

Madame. Yes, my religious worsted! (She gives him a little slap on the cheek.) Say, George, why do you part your hair so much on one side? Part it in the middle; it would be so much more becoming. Yes, you may kiss me, but gently and without violence!

Monsieur. Can you divine my thoughts?

Madame. How on earth could I?

Monsieur. Well, I was thinking of the barometer which is falling, and of the thermometer which is falling also.

Madame. And, so you see, cold weather is approaching fast and my poor rug will never be finished. Come, let us be industrious.

Monsieur. I was thinking of the falling thermometer and of my room which faces the north.

Madame. But did you not choose it yourself? Oh! my worsted, my worsted! Goodness! what a terrible man!

Monsieur. In summer, my room is very cool and pleasant, doubtless; but in autumn, when the wind is penetrating and the rain dashes against the windows, when the fields and meadows seem hidden beneath a veil of sadness, when the storm-torn branches from the forest bestrew the plain, when the grove has lost its mystery and the nightingale is voiceless, oh! then, Madame, the room facing the north seems very much to the north and—

Madame. (Continuing to separate her worsted.) What does all this rubbish mean?

Monsieur. It is a simple protest against the blasts; nothing more. God's beautiful sun is hidden; I seek another. Is it not natural, my little flaxen-haired saint, my little mystic lamb, my little blessed palm-branch? And in you alone, darling, do I find this new sun—in your bright eyes, in the fragrance of your flaxen curls and in the rustling of your silken skirts!

Madame. But will you hush, George! To-day is Friday and we are in the ember-days!

Monsieur. What of that when you have your dispensation, eh? (Kissing her.)

Madame. Oh! please be silent, George! (Withdrawing her hand from his, reclining in the arm-chair and avoiding his gaze.)

Monsieur. Your little heart is beating violently,

darling; it knows that autumn is the time for friendly chats, for evening family reunions at the fireside. Come, come; look me in the face, Louise.

Madame. (Leaning suddenly towards her husband—the ball of worsted rolling into the chimney, the pious work falling to the floor—and seizing his head with both her hands.) Ah! you would be an adorable husband, if you were—

Monsieur. If I were what?

Madame. If you were only a little religious! I would not demand much in the beginning. Come; it is not difficult. But, as it is, you are really too—"

Monsieur. Apple-green!

Madame. Yes, apple-green, you dear husband! (Laughs heartily.)

Monsieur. (Lifting his hands triumphantly.) Sound the bugle! Madame has laughed and the enemy is disarmed. (The clock strikes twelve.)

Madame. (Suddenly changing the expression of her features on hearing the strokes of the clock.) Did you think I did not love you, dearest, tell me? Oh! yes! yes! I love you! Stupid fellow! but did you not see the clock?

Monsieur. Why, no.

Madame. Well, it is after midnight—look! (She blushes deeply.) Friday is yesterday!

Monsieur. Are you sure the clock is not fast, darling?

CHAPTER X.

A BIT OF CONVERSATION.

MADAME *A.* As to myself, you know, my dear, I fulfil my duties as is becoming; but, then, I am not what is generally called devout—Oh! not at all. Hand me the scissors, please. Thank you.

Madame B. Not at all, darling. How tedious these little guipure squares must be to make. As regards devotion, I am altogether of your opinion; first, I think nothing should be exaggerated. What is your idea? Indeed, I have never spoken with any one in relation to this subject; but our thoughts agree so thoroughly that—

Madame A. Come, come, my dear; you love me a little, I hope?

Madame B. Well then, frankly, have you ever entertained doubts?

Madame A. (After an instant's reflection.) Doubts? Never; and you?

Madame B. Yes, I have had a few, and oh! how I have suffered and wept!

Madame A. I believe you, my poor darling! My faith is very firm. Those doubts must have rendered you exceedingly unhappy.

Madame B. Horribly so. It seems as though you

had lost everything, you know; there is an absolute void. Of course, I have never spoken to my husband of these doubts—certainly not! Léon is a pearl among men; but he will not hear that subject discussed. The day after our wedding—I can still see him!—I was just about to arrange my hair; those large head-bands were worn then, you know!

Madame A. Yes, yes; they were charming, too; they will be in fashion again, mark my word.

Madame B. I should not be at all surprised; fashion is a wheel that turns continually. But Léon said, the day after our wedding: "My dear child, I shall not endeavor to prevent you from going to church; but, in the name of goodness, never say a word to me about it!"

Madame A. Did Monsieur B—— really say that?

Madame B. Upon my word, he did. Oh! my husband is, in every respect, the most—or, if you prefer it, the least—

Madame A. Yes, yes, I understand. It is a great pity, too. Mine is only indifferent. He expresses, from time to time, very atrocious sentiments, to be sure; but, then, I know he could easily be brought back into the right path. Wait until he is sick and you will see! If he has but a slight catarrh, I can perceive a change for the better. Do you see my thimble anywhere?

Madame B. Here it is. Do not be too confident, my dear; men are not to be brought back like chickens

by crying pst! pst! Certainly, I infinitely admire those men who attend to their religious duties; you know me too well to doubt that. But, as I have already said, I think that nothing should be exaggerated. Now, would you, my darling, like to see your husband march before the banner, holding a large candle in his right hand—and—a bouquet in his left?

Madame A. No, indeed! Ah! ah! ah! What a foolish creature you are! You might as well ask me if I should like to see Léon in a black silk skull-cap, with cotton in his ears and a holy-water brush in his hand! It is not at all necessary, in order to be pious, for a man to promenade the church, singing, with his nose in a book; there is a more refined religion: that of—of—well-bred persons.

Madame B. Ah! when you speak thus, I perfectly agree with you; I consider that there is nothing more beautiful than a man in his religious enthusiasm: the arms folded, no book, the head slightly bowed, grave mien, his coat buttoned. Have you ever seen Monsieur de P—— at worship? Heavens! how handsome he is!

Madame A. He is, indeed, a fine looking man! Besides, his dress is so neat! Have you ever seen him on horseback? Ah! but you have doubts; tell me upon what, since we speak in confidence.

Madame B. I hardly know how to tell you. I have doubts in regard to—to—the infernal regions, for example. Oh! horrible doubts! But let us not speak of that; I am sure it is impious!

Madame A. I give the subject a very wide berth. I never think of it. Moreover, my confessor has assisted me greatly in this respect. "Do not seek," says he, always, "to comprehend the incomprehensible." Do you know Father Gédéon? A pearl of a confessor! I am very well satisfied with him. He is never tedious, but always discreet and so well-bred! He became a monk on account of — of — a little penitent who fell desperately in love with him.

Madame B. Is it possible!

Madame A. A fact. What! you have never heard of it? The great success of his parish is due to that little adventure. Before the arrival of Father Gédéon, it simply vegetated; but the ladies soon came in crowds and organized a little society called "The Ladies of Anguish." They prayed for those Chinese who died without confessing, and wore cuff-buttons in the shape of death's heads. This has, since, become very fashionable, as you know. The good fathers organized, in their turn, an intelligence office for valets de chambre, and, through one thing and another, the parish has grown very popular and rich. I have even heard that they intend to displace one of the most important railway dépôts of Paris in order to enlarge their garden, which is now rather small.

Madame B. As to that, it is perfectly natural that the good fathers, who never go into the world, should have room to promenade in their own domains. But what I cannot understand is how a woman, be she ever

so pious, could fall in love with a priest! One may, indeed, assume that it is no longer piety, but fanaticism. I venerate priests, of course; but, then, I cannot imagine how—You will laugh at me, ah! ah! ah!

Madame A. Not at all. Ah! ah! ah! What a child you are.

Madame B. (Applying herself very industriously to her work.) Well, then, I cannot imagine how they can be men like the others.

Madame A. (Applying herself to her work with equal assiduity.) And yet, my dear, I have been assured that they are.

Madame B. But there are so many false rumors! (Long silence.)

Madame A. (More discreetly.) There are priests with beards—the Capuchins, for example.

Madame B. I do not think that proves anything.

Madame A. It is something, however. How is it that the strongest, most courageous and most masculine men—the soldiers, in fine—invariably have the strongest beards?

Madame B. That is a very childish idea, indeed, for then the sappers would be more courageous than the generals, and, at all events, I am sure there is not in France a general who has a stronger beard than a Capuchin. But have you never looked at a Capuchin?

Madame A. Yes; I had a very near view of one. It is really quite a curious story: the brother of Clementine's cook is a Capuchin — he was formerly

a jeweller and a very respectable man. On account of losses in business — it was in '48 and trade was in a very bad condition—this poor man lost his mind and—no, he did not lose his mind, for he threw himself into the church.

Madame B. Oh! but such a thing was never heard of! What! Clementine—?

Madame A. Like yourself, I would not believe it, at first; but, one day, Clementine said to me: "Since you will not believe in the Capuchin, call on me to-morrow afternoon at about three o'clock when he intends to visit his sister. We will take luncheon together." Very well; I arrived at Clementine's the next day with Louise, who insisted upon accompanying me, and found five or six ladies comfortably installed in the parlor and laughing in the most uproarious manner. They had all come to see the Capuchin. "Is he here?" cried I, on entering, and all the ladies whispered: "Hush! hush!" with expressive gestures. He was in the kitchen.

Madame B. And how did you like him?

Madame A. Oh! very well—except the feet; you know their feet are always rather chilling! But, then, he was very amiable. We invited him into the parlor; he would not take a thing but a little biscuit and a glass of water—how that spoiled our appetite! He was quite gay, and told us we were coquettes with our little hats, ample robes, etc., etc. He was exceedingly droll, with a good bit of the jeweller about him still,

but excessively good-natured and entertaining. He imitated the buzzing of flies in a marvellous manner. He also wished to show us a trick, but it required two corks and his sister could, unfortunately, find but one.

Madame B. I should not like to see a monk in my kitchen beside the pot of soup!

Madame A. What a child you are!

Madame B. But, do you know, my husband has succeeded in giving rise to many doubts in my mind—and succeeded, I must say, in justice to him, without being aware of it—in respect to many religious observances, such as fasting, vespers, sermons and confession!

Madame A. Confession! Oh! my darling, I never would have believed that!

Madame B. I tell you this in confidence, dearest. You will never mention it, will you? Pledge me your word!

Madame A. Confession! Yes, yes, I give you my word, darling. Come, let me embrace you!

Madame B. You pity me, do you not?

Madame A. I cannot pity you too much, for—for—I am in the same position!

Madame B. You, too? Great heavens! how I love you! But what can we do? Is it not necessary to introduce some conciliation into the household—to form our beliefs in accordance with those of our husbands?

Madame A. Most assuredly. For example, how

on earth can I attend high mass, which takes place, in our parish, at precisely eleven o'clock? It is my breakfast hour. Could I allow my poor, dear husband to breakfast alone? He would never seek to prevent me from going to high mass—he has told me so a hundred times; but, then, he has always added: "When you wish to attend service during the breakfast hour, I only ask one kindness of you: that you inform me in time in order that I may invite a few friends to keep me company."

Madame B. Our husbands could not resemble each other more closely if they were brothers!

Madame A. How we have chatted! Why, it is half-past five o'clock, and time I should be going.

Madame B. Wait a moment; I have lost my thimble again.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FOOT-WARMER.

AT midnight, when the fire is dead on the hearth, the lamp burns low and the weary eyes involuntarily close, the most prudent course to pursue, dear Madame, is to retire.

Quit your arm-chair, remove your bracelets, light your rose-colored candle, and, slowly, to the murmur of your skirt that trembles as it sweeps the carpet, direct your steps towards your dressing-room.

Before the mirror that tells so well the story of what it sees, you pause a moment with seeming indifference, and cast upon your own reflection a lingering, happy smile; then, removing with your tapering fingers the hair-pins from your luxuriant locks, your wavy tresses fall in floods upon your shoulders. Curving your little finger with a coquettish movement, you reunite these refractory floods and plunge into this golden forest your tortoise-shell comb the delicate teeth of which bend beneath the effort.

Your tresses are so abundant that your little hand can hardly clasp them; they are so long that your arm, stretched to its utmost extent, can scarcely reach their extremity, and it is not without difficulty that you succeed in twisting them into glittering braids and in forcing them under your tiny silken cap.

This task accomplished, you turn a silver spigot and the pure, limpid water leaps into a large porcelain basin, into which you cast several drops of that rosy liquid which softens and perfumes the skin.

But no matter; you complete your night toilet, and, fresh, pure and white as a nun, you force your little bare feet into a pair of tiny satin slippers, and don your embroidered gown of the purest linen; then, trembling slightly, you enter your chamber.

On reaching the couch, Madame takes off her slippers and, with a little bound, sinks into its downy depths.

At this, Monsieur, who is already asleep with his nose in his journal, awakes with a start.

"I thought you had retired long ago," he murmurs, falling asleep again; "good-night."

"If I had retired, you would have been well aware of it. (Madame extends her limbs and seems to search for something with her feet.) Oh! I am in no such hurry to sleep as you are, thank heaven!"

Monsieur. (Suddenly, and with visible annoyance.) But what is the matter with you, my dear? You toss and toss. I need repose. (Turns over.)

"I toss! I am merely looking for my foot-warmer. You are a miracle of stupidity!"

(Vexed.) "Your foot-warmer!—your foot-warmer!"

"Of course; my feet are frozen. (She continues to search.) You are really very amiable, this evening; you began by dozing over the Revue des Deux-Mondes,

and now I find you snoring over the Moniteur. If I were you, I should change my reading-matter. I am sure you have taken my foot-warmer!"

"I was wrong; I shall subscribe to the Tintamarre. Come now, good-night, my dear. (Turns over.) Why, your foot-warmer is at the foot of the bed; I can feel it!"

"Well, then, why do you not push it towards me? Do you think I can get it myself?"

"Shall I ring for your waiting-maid to assist you? (He makes a movement indicative of ill-humor, draws the cover under his chin and forces his head deeper into the pillow.) Good-night, my dear."

Madame. (Offended.) Good-night! good-night!

Monsieur's breathing grows slower and more regular; his brow loses its wrinkles and recovers its placid look; he is about to lose all consciousness of worldly things.

Madame taps lightly upon her husband's shoulder.

"Hum!" cries Monsieur, grumbling.

Madame taps again.

"Well, what do you want now?"

Madame. (In an angelic tone of voice.) My dear, will you please extinguish the light?

Monsieur. (Without opening his eyes.) The foot-warmer, the light, the light, the foot-warmer!

"Great heavens! how irritable you are, Oscar! I will extinguish it myself; do not inconvenience yourself, pray! You really have a very bad temper, my

dear; your ill-humor is unbearable, and, without the slightest reason, you go to the utmost extremes."

Monsieur. (His voice muffled by the pillow.) You are altogether wrong! I am sleepy, my dear; that is all. Good-night, my little wife.

Madame. (Vivaciously.) You forget that in housekeeping a perfect understanding depends entirely upon mutual respect!

"I was wrong; come, good-night. (He turns slightly towards her.) Do you wish me to kiss you?"

"I do not wish it, but I shall tolerate it!" (She turns her face towards that of her husband, who kisses her upon the forehead.)

"It is really too kind of you; you have kissed my cap!"

Monsieur. (Smiling.) How nicely your hair is perfumed! Come, you know I am so sleepy! Why, you have arranged it in little plaits; you intend to wear it in artistic disorder, to-morrow, eh?

"Artistic disorder! You were the first to consider it becoming in that style; besides, artistic disorder, as you call it, is all the rage, and I receive to-morrow. Come, you bad-tempered man, give me a hearty kiss and then snore at your leisure; I know you are dying to snore!" (She turns towards her husband, presenting him her lips to kiss.)

Monsieur. (Smiling.) In the first place, I never snore, never! (He impresses a kiss upon his wife's lips.)

Madame pouts and casts a half-disarmed glance upon her husband.

Monsieur. (Speaking very low, after a long silence, and with his lips close to his wife's ear.) Darling, I am not at all sleepy now. Are your feet still cold? Wait; I will look for the foot-warmer!

"Oh! thank you! Extinguish the light and let us go to sleep; I am dying with fatigue." (She turns and places her arm across Monsieur's face.)

"No, no; I do not wish you to go to sleep with cold feet; there is nothing worse than that. Ah! here is the foot-warmer; place your poor feet against it—there—that way."

"Thank you; I am very comfortable now. Good-night, my dear—good-night!"

"Good-night, my darling."

After some time, Monsieur taps his wife gently upon the shoulder.

Madame. (Frightened.) What is the matter? Heavens! how you frightened me!"

Monsieur. (Smiling.) Will you have the kindness to extinguish the light?

"What! was it for that you waked me when I was sleeping so soundly? I shall never be able to fall asleep again! You are intolerable!"

"Am I really intolerable?"

"You are a veritable tiger! (After a very long period of silence and half asleep.) Oscar!"

Monsieur. (His eyes closed and in a feeble voice.) My darling!

"Is the light still burning?"

"Ah! the light! I will extinguish it. (In darkness.) It would be very kind of you to let me have half of the foot-warmer; my feet are like ice. Good-night."

"Good-night."

And now they fall asleep.

PART THIRD.—THE FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BABY.

IT was the evening of the 15th of February. The cold was intense. The snow dashed against the windows and the wind whistled an icy air through the key-holes. My two aunts, sitting at a table in the corner of the parlor, gave vent, from time to time, to deep, heavy sighs, and, moving restlessly in their arm-chairs, cast, every instant, uneasy glances towards the door of the bed-room. One of these ladies drew from a leather bag upon the table her chaplet and counted her beads with both hands, while her sister read a volume of the correspondence of Voltaire, which she held at some distance from her eyes.

As to myself, I walked the parlor with great strides, furiously biting my moustache—a bad habit from which I have never been able to free myself—stopping, now and then, in front of Doctor C——, an old comrade of mine, who was quietly reading his journal before the fire. I hesitated to interrupt him, so deeply was he interested in his paper; but, in reality, I was

irritated to see him so calm and composed when I myself was so terribly agitated.

Suddenly, throwing the journal upon the sofa and passing his hand over his bald head:

"Ah!" said he, "if I were minister, this state of affairs would not continue long, by Jove, it would not! Have you read that article on Algerian cotton? There are only two alternatives: either irrigation or—but you are not listening to me; and yet it is more important than you suppose."

He arose, thrust his hands into his pockets and walked up and down the room, humming a little air he had learned at the hospital. I followed him, step by step.

"Jacques," said I, the moment he turned, "tell me frankly, are you perfectly satisfied?"

"Certainly, I am satisfied. Behold the limpidity of my gaze!" And he burst into a rather boisterous fit of good, hearty laughter.

"You are not concealing anything from me, dear friend?"

"Heavens! how stupid you are, my poor Captain! I tell you that everything is getting on finely." And he continued to hum his little air, jingling the money in his pocket. "Yes; everything is getting on finely, but it requires time. I wish you would give me a wrapper; I should be more at ease then. These ladies will excuse me, I trust."

"Excuse you!—you, my dear doctor and friend!"

"Well, then, if they will excuse me, I should like very much to borrow a pair of slippers also."

At this moment, a cry of pain was heard from the neighboring apartment, and a voice, broken by suffering, articulated distinctly the following words:

"Doctor—ah! in heaven's name—Doctor!"

"Oh it is terrible," muttered my aunts, moving restlessly in their arm-chairs.

"My dear friend," cried I, seizing the doctor's arm, "are you quite sure you are not concealing anything from me? Tell me, tell me!"

"If you have a large pair, they would suit me better; I have no girl's foot, you know. Why do you suppose that I should conceal anything? As I have already said, everything is getting on finely, but it requires time. By the bye, tell Joseph to hunt me up a smoking-cap; once in slippers and a wrapper, there is nothing extraordinary about a smoking-cap; moreover, I am growing bald, Captain. How frigid it is here! These windows face the north and are without weather-strips! Mademoiselle de V——," cried he, turning towards one of my aunts, "you will most assuredly catch cold." And then, upon a repetition of the painful cries; "Come," said he.

We entered the bed-room. My wife's mother was at her side consoling her.

She smiled upon her, but her eyes were full of tears, and she turned, from time to time, to dry them. On the bureau lay two or three little bundles, wrapped in

red and blue favors: they were the baby's first toilet, sweetly perfumed and ready for use. I took one of the little caps and put it over my fist, which it hardly covered.

"Come to me," said my poor darling, who had seen me enter; "come, give me your hand and do not withdraw it."

I remained beside her, my hand in hers, while the doctor, who had donned my wrapper, sought vainly to button it around him. The fire crackled in the chimney. The pendulum of the clock continued its monotonous tic-tac; but it seemed to me that this great calm was only apparent, and that everything around me was in the same state of anxiety and emotion as myself. In the neighboring bed-room, the door of which was partially open, I saw one end of the tiny cradle, and, upon the wall, the shadow of the nurse who had fallen asleep while waiting.

What I experienced was very strange. I felt a sentiment entirely new to me spring into being in my heart; a strange something seemed to take possession of my breast—a sensation so unknown to me and yet so sweet that I trembled as if in fear. I felt this little creature that was to be cling to me, and his whole life lay before my mind's eye. It was a vision of what was yet to come; I saw him as a child and as a man; it seemed to me that I was about to lead a double life in him, and I felt an irresistible need of giving him something of my own being.

Towards half-past eleven o'clock, the doctor drew from his vest pocket a large watch, consulting it as a mariner does his compass, and, muttering a few words, approached the bed.

"Do you think the moment is approaching, Jacques?" said I.

"I believe that within half an hour's time the little darling will have made her entrance into the world; notice the clock."

"What do you mean by her? My good fellow, this is to be a boy, you know; no jesting, Jacques!"

Jacques grew serious, removed the wrapper and cast it upon the sofa. I looked at him as the mariner looks at the heavens on the approach of a storm.

"Come, my dear friend," said he to my wife, "we are all near you, and everything is well."

My mother-in-law was beside herself. Her cap was disarranged and her hair so singularly disheveled that, under any other circumstances, I should have laughed outright. At one moment, I heard the parlor door open, and saw, one above the other, the two heads of my aunts, and, behind them, that of my father who was twirling his large white moustache with a grimace peculiar to himself.

"Close the door!" cried the doctor, angrily. "Go away!" And turning towards my mother-in-law, he said, with the greatest coolness imaginable: "I ask a thousand pardons, Madame!"

But my old comrade's roughness had the desired effect: the door was closed immediately.

* * * * * * *

At last, after a deep silence, the doctor held up a small rosy being, which, almost immediately, gave a little cry as sharp and piercing as a needle. I shall never forget the impression made upon me by the sudden apparition of this tiny creature in the midst of the family. We had often thought of it, dreamed of it, and my imagination had frequently pictured to me our darling baby, playing upon the floor, pulling my moustache, learning to walk, or, in the arms of its nurse, gorging itself with milk like a greedy little cat, and going down the stairs with both mother and father after it, and I—so clumsy as to step on my wife's dress; all these things I thought, but I had never thought of it as inanimate, almost without a vestige of life, incredibly small, bald, grinning—and charming, beloved, adored in spite of its ugliness, the poor little creature! The impression was so singular that it is impossible to understand it without a similar experience.

"You are a lucky man, Captain!" muttered the doctor, turning the infant towards me; "it is a boy!"

"A boy!"

"A sound and hearty boy, Captain!"

And this tiny living being screamed and gesticulated as Jacques held it out in his hand. I felt almost insignificant before this trembling atom of humanity! I do not pretend to explain all this; I only give you my impressions.

My mother-in-law held out her apron, and the

doctor deposited the infant upon its grandmother's knees, saying:

"Come, my little savage, try not to be worse than your father was. And now, why don't you embrace me, Captain?"

And we did embrace each other heartily. The doctor's little black eyes shone and blinked more than usual; I saw clearly that he was touched.

"Did it shock you much, Captain? It was the shriek! Ah! how well I know it: it is a stiletto that pierces the heart! Where is the nurse? Ah! here she is. But open the door to the prisoners in the parlor."

I opened the door. Every one was listening behind it: my father, tearing his moustache; my two aunts, one grasping her Voltaire, the other her chaplet; and my own good old nurse, who had come in a cab.

"Well? well?" cried all at once, "well?"

"It is all over! It is a boy! Come in; there he is!"

You cannot imagine how happy I was to see my emotion reflected in all these friendly faces. I was embraced, my hands were pressed and my shoulders were patted, and I replied to each hearty congratulation without knowing from whom it came.

"By thun—der!" muttered my father, as he threw his arms around me — he still held his hat and cane in his hand—"By thun—" But he could not finish the ejaculation; strong as was his desire to appear brave, a great, brilliant tear trembled at the end of his nose. "Hum!" said he, from under his moustache, and he

burst into tears upon my shoulder, exclaiming: "I cannot help it, my boy!"

And I—I did exactly as he did; nor could I help it either!

Meanwhile, everybody had surrounded the grandmother, who, raising the corner of her apron, cried:

"Is he not a beauty? Nurse, warm the linen and give me his cap."

"Coo to aunty," chirped one of my aunts, jingling her beads above his head, "coo to aunty, darling."

"Take advantage of the opportunity and ask him to recite you a fable," added the doctor.

"Where is he?" my wife murmured, faintly.

They pointed to her mother's apron.

Taking my hand, she drew me to her side and whispered, so low as to be almost inaudible:

"It is a boy, is it not?"

"Yes, darling."

"Come, come!" cried the doctor. "No emotion! You may embrace each other to-morrow. Colonel," he added, turning to my father, who yet held his hat and cane, "prevent them from embracing, please. No emotion! Let every one leave the room. I am going to dress the young Captain of the Lancers. Pass me the gentleman, grandma. Hold still, you little savage!"

He took the tiny fellow in his two large hands and sat down with him before the fire.

I kept my eyes fixed upon my boy, as Jacques turned him over and over like a puppet, but with extreme

caution. He examined him thoroughly, sounded him and patted him, saying, with a jovial smile:

"Hearty as a buck, Captain, hearty as a buck!"

Then he wrapped him in his warm linen, covered his tiny, bald head with a triple-padded cap, tied a ribbon under his chin to prevent his head from falling back, and, viewing his work with satisfaction:

"You have seen me perform this operation, nurse," said he; "every morning you must dress the little Captain exactly as I have done. Until to-morrow sugared water will suffice. The mother has no fever whatever. Everything progresses finely. What luck you have, Captain! As to myself, I am as hungry as a wolf? Do you know it is one o'clock in the morning? Have you not a stray bit of partridge, or a piece of cold pâté that no one has any further use for? Anything of the sort would be very acceptable to me—with a bottle of something or other!"

We both descended into the dining-room, where we set the table without ceremony.

Never in my life did I eat and drink so much and so heartily as that morning.

"Come," said the doctor, drawing on his overcoat, "you must retire. To-morrow, you shall have a permanent nurse; I will send one. But no, I will call for you, and we two will go and choose one. Be under arms at half-past eight, Captain. Good-morning!"

CHAPTER II.

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN THE FAMILY — FIVE YEARS LATER.

IT is hardly seven o'clock. A pale, dull ray of light breaks through the double curtains, and there is already some one at the door. I hear, in the adjoining room, stifled peals of laughter and the silvery voice of my boy, which trembles with impatience and demands admission.

"Papa," cries he, "it is baby, it is the little one, who has come to wish you a happy New Year!"

"Enter, my darling; come embrace us—quick!"

The door opens and the little fellow, his arms stretched out towards us and his bright eyes sparkling, precipitates himself into the room. From under his night-cap, which imprisons his golden hair, escape long, refractory curls that fall over his forehead. His great, flowing night-gown catches under his feet, augments his impatience and causes him to stumble at every step.

At last, he has crossed the room, and, putting his tiny hands in mine:

"Baby wishes you a happy New Year!" he lisps, in a trembling voice.

"Poor little love, with bare feet! Come, my

darling, come warm yourself under the covers; come hide yourself among the feathers."

I draw him to me; but my wife, who has been fast asleep until now, is awakened by the movement, and, springing up in bed:

"Who is there?" she cries, grasping at the bell. "Help! Robbers!"

"But it is only we, my dear."

"You?—who? Heavens! how you frightened me! I dreamed that the house was on fire, and then came your voices in the midst of the confusion! You were very imprudent to cry aloud!"

"Cry aloud! But you forget, little mother, that it is New Year's morning, the day of good wishes and kisses! Baby awaits your waking and I also."

I wrap my little man in the soft quilt, press him down into the feathers and warm his icy feet in my hands.

"Mamma, it is New Year's day," he cries, and, taking our two heads in his tiny hands, he draws them together, bends over us, and kisses first one and then the other. I feel his little, dimpled fingers press upon my neck and entangle themselves in my beard.

My moustache pricks the end of his nose, and, throwing back his curly head, he laughs aloud in childish glee.

His mother, who has now recovered from her fright, clasps him in her arms and rings the bell.

"The New Year dawns happily, my dear ones," she exclaims; "but it would be better to have a little more light."

"Say, mamma, bad children get no toys on New Year's day, do they?" With these words, the cunning fellow glances towards a mountain of bundles and boxes heaped up in the corner, visible despite the obscurity of the apartment.

The curtains are soon drawn aside, the shutters are thrown open, and the room is flooded with sunbeams; the fire crackles gayly on the hearth and two large bundles, carefully wrapped, are placed upon the bed. One is for my wife and the other for baby.

What is it? What can it be? I have tied the strings in a thousand knots and tripled the wrappers, and my joy is unbounded as I follow the movements of their busy fingers that seek to open the bundles.

My wife grows impatient, smiles, becomes angry, embraces me and calls for the scissors.

As to baby, he pulls with all his might, bites his lips and ends by asking my assistance. His eyes are eager to pierce the envelope. All the signs of anxious expectation are visible upon his countenance. His hand, lost in the depths of the bed, rustles the silken cover by its convulsive movements, and his lips move with a noise as at the approach of delicious fruit.

Finally, the last paper is torn off. The lid is removed and their eyes beam with joy.

"My tippet!"

"My menagerie!"

"It exactly matches my muff—what a dear, good husband!"

"Oh! and a shepherd on wheels—dear papa, how I love you!"

Four arms are immediately entwined around my neck, embracing me again and again. My heart is full and, glancing towards my wife, I see two pearly tears gleaming on her cheeks. Baby is wild with joy, and a little sigh escapes him as he kisses my hand.

This is absurd, I hear you say.

Perhaps so—but it is delicious!

And, after all, does not suffering claim so many tears that we may be pardoned the few with which joy may moisten the eye?

Life is not so sweet that one might wish to venture upon it alone; and when the heart is empty, the road is long.

It is pleasant to feel that one is beloved, to hear at one's side the well-known steps of one's travelling companions, and to murmur: "They are here; our three hearts beat in unison." And, once a year, when the clock at midnight welcomes the first of January, how delicious it is to sit down together by the wayside, your hands clasped in theirs, your eyes fixed upon the dusty road which loses itself at the horizon, and to say, with a fond embrace: "Our love is pure and true, my dear ones; trust in me and I will trust in

you. Let us have confidence and wander down the hill of life hand in hand together."

That, I believe, is why one weeps a little on looking upon a tippet and on opening a child's menagerie.

But the breakfast hour draws nigh. I have cut my chin twice in shaving my beard; I have walked over the animals in my boy's menagerie, and have twelve visits in prospect — obligatory visits, as my wife is pleased to call them; nevertheless, I am perfectly happy.

We seat ourselves at table. The plates, glistening upon a cloth of the purest white, have an unaccustomed air of festivity. A slight odor of truffles fills the air; every one smiles, and, through the windows, I see—what is strange, indeed,—the concierge polishing the rail of the stairway with his own hands and his own pocket-handkerchief, by heavens! Oh! it is a charming day!

Baby has arranged his elephants, lions and giraffes in a line around his plate, and his mother, under the pretext of being chilly, breakfasts in her tippet.

"Have you ordered the carriage for our visits, my dear?"

"Aunt Ursule's cushion will occupy an entire seat—but, then, we can place it on the box with the driver."

"Oh! poor aunt!"

"Papa, do not visit Aunt Ursule," says baby. "She always pricks me when she kisses me!"

"Monsieur Baby! Have you thought of all that we

have to take with us in the carriage—Léon's walking-horse, Louise's muff, your father's slippers, Ernestine's rug, the bonbons and the work-box? My word for it, you will have to place Aunt Ursule's cushion under the driver's feet!"

"Papa, why will the giraffe not eat mutton chops?"

"I cannot say, my little man."

"Nor I, either, papa!"

An hour later, we ascend Aunt Ursule's stairway. My wife counts the steps as she clings to the balustrade, and I carry the famous cushion, the bonbons and my boy, who would not consent to accompany us without his giraffe.

Aunt Ursule, who produces upon my boy the same effect as a handful of rods, awaits us in her icy little parlor. Four square arm-chairs, covered with yellow cloth, stand drearily behind four little foot-mats. A clock, in the form of a pyramid surmounted by a ball, gives vent to its monotonous tic-tac beneath a glass globe twice as large as necessary.

A portrait hanging from the wall and spotted by flies represents a nymph, armed with a lyre, basking beside a cascade. This nymph is Aunt Ursule. How she has changed!

"My dear aunt, we come to wish you a happy New Year."

"And to wish you all the joy—"

"Enough, my nephew and niece; sit down." And she points out the chairs upon which we are to sit.

"I am sensible of your kindness in putting yourselves to this trouble; it proves that you have not completely forgotten the duties imposed upon you by relationship."

"You do not take into consideration, my dear aunt, the affection we entertain for you, which alone is a sufficient motive for our visit. Baby, come kiss your aunt."

Baby. (Whispering in my ear.) But, papa, I assure you she pricks me! (I place the bonbons upon the table.)

"My nephew, you might have dispensed with this present; you know very well that confectionery does not agree with me, and, if I were not aware of your indifference in regard to my health, I should look upon it as a piece of sarcasm. But let us change the subject. Does your father still bear his infirmities courageously?"

"You are very kind, aunt."

"I thought to prepare you an agreeable surprise, dear aunt, in embroidering for you this cushion, which I trust you will accept."

"I thank you, my child, but I can still sit upright, thank heaven! and have no need of a cushion! The work is charming: it is an oriental design. You might have made a better choice, knowing that I admire simplicity. It is charming, however, although this red beside the green brings tears into one's eyes. I have already experienced this sensation in peeling onions.

Taste in the selection of colors is not a common gift! In return, I offer you my photograph, which the good Abbé Miron implored me to have taken in the form of a carte de visite, as you see."

"Oh! how kind you are, and how striking is the resemblance! Do you recognize your aunt, baby?"

"Do not consider yourself obliged to express an opinion which you do not entertain. This photograph bears no resemblance to me at all; my eyes are much brighter. Here is also a package of jujube for your offspring. He seems to have grown."

"Baby, come embrace your aunt."

"And we will leave afterwards, mamma?"

"You are very impolite, my boy!"

"Let him speak; he, at least, is frank! But I see that your husband is growing impatient; you have several other similar—duties to perform and I shall not detain you. I shall attend service, and pray for those who never bend the knee."

"One obligatory visit from twelve leaves eleven. Hum!—Driver, Rue Saint-Louis in the Marais."

"But has not Aunt Ursule pins in her chin, papa?"

With your permission we will pass the eleven other obligatory visits; they are as disagreeable to describe as to make.

Towards five o'clock in the afternoon — God be praised! — the horses stop before the paternal domicile, where dinner awaits us. Baby claps his tiny hands and smiles to old Jeannette, who, attracted by the

noise of the carriage, has come to open the door. "Here they are!" she cries, and carries baby with her into the kitchen, where my mother, her sleeves rolled up to the elbow, is giving the finishing touch to the traditional cake.

My father, who is about to descend into the cellar, lamp in hand, escorted by his old servant, Jean, who carries the wine basket, stops suddenly.

"How late you are, my children! Come to my arms, my dear ones; this is the day for hearty embraces! Here, Jean, hold the lamp a minute."

And so my aged father clasps me to his breast, his hand seeks mine and presses it cordially. Baby, who is passing to and fro, pulls us by our coats and holds up his little lips for a kiss.

"But I detain you in the hall, and you are nearly frozen, I know; enter the parlor; you will find there a warm fire and some good friends."

We have been heard; the door opens and loving arms are stretched towards us. In the midst of pressures of the hand, embraces, kisses and good wishes, the boxes are opened, there is a shower of bonbons, the bundles are torn apart, gayety grows into tumult and good humor into uproar.

Baby, standing amid his riches, is like one intoxicated in the treasure-vaults, and from time to time he gives vent to his happiness in a little cry of joy, as he discovers some new plaything.

"But the little man has a fable to recite!" cries my father, as he takes the lamp from Jean's hand.

This declaration produces a deep silence, and the poor child, who is just about to make his first attempt in the art of declamation, suddenly loses every vestige of courage. He gazes upon the floor, blushes and takes refuge in his mother's arms, who, bending to his ear, whispers:

"Come, darling, begin: 'A lamb was quenching its thirst—'; you remember—the little lamb?"

"Yes, mamma, the little sheep that wished to drink." And, in a contrite voice, his head hanging upon his breast, he recites, with a deep sigh: "'A lamb was quenching its thirst in a stream of pure, transparent water.'"

And we all listen with smiles upon our lips to the delicious jargon of the child.

Uncle Bertrand, who is rather deaf, has bent his hand into the shape of a trumpet, and, drawing his chair nearer to the orator: "Ah! yes, yes," says he; "I understand: it is 'The Fox and the Grapes.'" And, upon several persons crying hush, he adds: "Yes, yes; he recites with much address, very much address!"

Rendered more confident by his success, baby terminates his fable with a peal of hearty laughter. Gayety is communicative and we sit down at table in the midst of unrestrained mirth.

The soup tureen is enveloped in a cloud of steam,

and my mother, after having cast a smiling glance around the table, plunges the ladle into the savory liquid.

Ah! well! a glass to the family table where are seated those whom we love and trust, where, during dessert, we are not afraid to lean our elbows upon the cloth, and where we find, after a lapse of thirty years, the good old wine our fathers drank at our christening!

CHAPTER III.

THE WIFE'S LETTERS.

I HAVE very great need, my dear Marie, of several of those little caps,—you know which ones I mean. Now, will you not have the kindness to send me the pattern of your own invention—that with the drawing-strings, you know? Thank you, very much, for your padded quilt. It is soft, pliable, warm and delightful, and my baby, lying in its white, downy depths, is like a rose-bud hidden in the snow. I am growing poetic, am I not? Ah! if you only knew how my poor heart overflows with joy! My boy! you understand, darling, he is my boy! When I heard the sharp cry of this little being that my mother held out to me in her apron, it seemed that a burning shiver of love passed through my entire frame. I cried out and wept. The bald, shining head of my good old doctor was at my side, and I grasped it in my hands and kissed it thrice.

"Be calm, my dear," said he.

"Silence, Doctor, or I shall kiss you again! Give me my darling, my baby. Are you quite sure it is a boy?"

And in the adjoining apartment, where the entire family had awaited the event, I heard, amid the sound of kisses, those delicious words: "It is a boy, a fine boy!"

My poor husband, who during twelve long hours had

not left my side, broken with emotion and fatigue, wept and laughed in the corner of the room.

"Come, nurse, swathe him promptly. No pins! by thunder, no pins, you know! Strings, nothing but strings! What do you say? Give me the child; you know nothing at all about it!"

And the good doctor dressed him with wonderful rapidity.

"The young rascal has the air of a colonel! Put him in the cradle with a—come, come, be calm, my dear friend—with a foot-warmer at his feet. Not too much fire, especially in the young gentleman's room! And now, be perfectly quiet, little mother; repose is necessary. Every one must leave the room!" And, as Aunt Ursule peeped through the half-open door and whispered in a very low voice: "Let me come in, Doctor, just to press her hand!" he added: "In the name of all the furies, get out! You know very well that silence and repose are absolutely necessary."

She disappeared.

"Oscar," continued the doctor, turning to my husband, "come, kiss your little wife and have done with it. How courageous she has been! Come, kiss her, and be quick about it or I shall kiss her myself!" he added, menacingly.

Oscar, lost in contemplation of his boy, heard nothing of what was said.

"Heavens! he will suffocate the little Colonel!"

My husband came to me, at last, and gave me his

trembling hand. I pressed it with all my might. That my heart did not break at that moment I am sure was because the good Lord knew I should have need of it afterwards.

You know, Marie, that before the advent of a baby in the household, one loves, it is true, but one loves egotistically; afterwards, one loves for the sake of the darling little cherub, which with its tiny hand rivets the chain forever. God permits the heart to open and enlarge for its reception. My heart was full, but my baby still found ample room. There was no overflow, however, and I feel that there is yet a good warm place for my mother and yourself, darling! Ah! you told me it would be so, and you spoke the truth. I lead a new life, a life of great affection and delicious devotion. My entire past existence seems now to have been insignificant and dull, and I feel that, in reality, I am just beginning to live. I am as proud as a soldier who has fought a good fight. Wife and mother, those are my epaulets! Grandmother, that is the marshal's bâton!

Oh! how sweet I shall render the existence of these two beloved beings! How I shall divine their every wish! Foolish child that I am, I weep—oh! could I but embrace you! I really believe I am too happy!

My husband could not be more kind. He holds his boy with such graceful awkwardness, and puts forth such an effort to raise this slight burden! When he brings him to me, hidden in his covers, he walks with

such slow and cautious steps that one might think the earth was about to give way beneath him! Then he places the little treasure upon my bed, presses him down into the soft depths of a pillow, very, very near me. We both bend over him, laugh to him, coo to him, and if, after countless efforts, we cause him to smile, our joy is boundless! Very often, we remain a long time in unbroken silence beside this little being, our heads resting in our hands and our eyes following the movements of his tiny, rosy fingers as they agitate the silken covers. And, oh! in this silent contemplation we find a charm of such untold happiness and calmness, that it requires something of more than ordinary importance to tear us from it!

You would die of laughter could you but overhear our discussions upon the shape of his forehead and the color of his eyes; and we always terminate our debates by forming projects for his future career, all of which are very foolish, no doubt, but very charming.

Oscar declares he shall be a diplomate; for he has, says he, the eye of a statesman, and his gestures, though few, are very impressive. Poor, dear little ambassador, with only three hairs like Cadet Roussel! But then what darling, golden hairs they are! How they curl over his fresh, rosy skin, whither kisses fly of themselves!

What, dear friend, are the invisible bonds that unite us to our infants? Is it a portion of our own souls that we have given them, a part of our own life that animates them? It must be something like that, for I

can read my baby's misty thoughts. I divine his desires; I know when he is cold and feel when he is hungry.

Do you know which is the most delightful moment of my life? It is when, after having made his evening repast, after having gorged himself like a hungry little kitten, his sweet eyelids fall upon his rosy cheeks and I rock him to sleep in my arms. His limbs slowly lose their power, his eyes close and his head sinks upon my breast, while his trembling lips, half-open, still repeat the movements they made but a few moments before.

His warm, moist breath reaches my hand as I hold him. Then I wrap him softly in the folds of my dress, hide his feet in his robe and contemplate my darling. I have him there upon my knees, and I feel that he is mine. Not a single sigh escapes his little lips that does not find an echo in my heart, and there is not a single movement of his tiny body that is not met by a response in my own. I feel, in the depths of my soul, a mirror that reflects his form; I feel that he is still a part of my being. Is it not I who nourish him; is it not my voice that calms and hushes him into slumber, my hand that dresses and caresses him, and my arm that sustains him? And the thought that I am everything to my darling lends a charm of delicious protection to the happiness of my life.

Yes; the present is golden, and I am intoxicated with happiness. But the future is also there, in the cloudy distance. I often think of it, and I know not

why, but I tremble as at the approach of a storm. Folly! I shall love him so discreetly and the weight of my affection shall rest so lightly upon his shoulders! Why should he leave me? Shall I not become his friend in time? And when a dark down shall have covered those now rosy lips, when the bird shall have felt the power of its wings and wished to launch itself from its silken nest, shall I not be able to draw him back, by invisible bonds, into those arms in which he now lies dreaming? Perhaps, in that terrible moment which men call youth, he will forget me! Other hands than mine, perhaps, shall smooth back his curly locks from his forehead. Alas! other lips may press where my lips now linger, and efface, with a single kiss, the recollection of twenty years of caresses! Yes, my boy; but when you return from this toilsome, weary journey, changed and broken, you will take refuge in those arms that rocked you to sleep in the olden time, hide your aching brow once more where it now lies, ask me to dry your tears and cause you to forget your toils and troubles. Then, I, weeping with joy, shall press upon your lips the kiss that consoles and inspires hope.

But, my dear Marie, I perceive that I am writing a volume! I shall not re-read what I have written, for if I did, I know well that I should never send it to you. Forgive me, dearest, for being a little poetic and, perhaps, foolish; but I have not, as yet, grown accustomed to being so happy!

* * * * * * *

Yes, my dear, he is a man now; really, a little man. He has returned from the country much larger and very hard to please. He climbs upon the chairs, stops the clocks, and struts, with his hands in his pockets, like a proprietor.

When I see my baby's little boots placed proudly beside his papa's, on descending into the hall in the morning, I make, in spite of myself, a review of a past which was not long ago. Yesterday swaddling-clothes, to-day boots, to-morrow spurs. Ah! happy days have wings! Four years gone already! I could hardly carry him now, taking for granted that he would permit me—for he is becoming very particular in regard to his manly dignity. He passes half of his time armed to the teeth; his pistols, guns, swords and whips are scattered all over the house. In his movements robust health is so apparent that I am overjoyed!

But do not imagine that my demon no longer possesses any redeeming qualities: at times he is an angel and returns my caresses with interest. In the evening, after dinner, he takes possession of my arm-chair, seizes my head in his hands and dresses my hair to suit his own taste. His little fresh lips impress a thousand kisses upon my own, kisses which make me tremble like an aspen. And then, we have interminable little chats together. The "whys" fall upon me like hailstones in winter, and to each one of them he demands a satisfactory reply, for the minds of children are, above all things, essentially logical. One example will suffice:

His grandmother is in rather bad health, and, every evening, he adds to his prayer the following simple words: "My God, bless my grandmother, whom I love with all my heart, with a return of perfect health." But in order to be more precise, he continues: "Thou knowest, good Lord, my grandmother who lives in the Rue Saint-Louis on the second floor!" He says this with such an expression of innocent confidence and gracefully amusing seriousness, the darling! You know, my dear, he wishes to save the good Lord the trouble of searching for the address!

But I must say farewell to you now; I hear him coughing. I know not whether he has taken a cold or not, but, since this morning, he has looked badly. Do not laugh at me if I appear unduly anxious in regard to his health.

* * * * * * *

There was a consultation yesterday. On departing, the tears stood in the eyes of our old family doctor; he tried to hide them, but I saw them! Is my child seriously ill? Oh! this is an atrocious, cruel thought, my poor friend. They wish to reassure me, but I tremble.

He was no better, last night. Still the terrible fever! Ah! if you could only see the change in this beautiful little being we so much admired! Oh! I do not wish to think of that which seems to be God's will! They have ordered ice to be put upon his head! I have had to cut off all those beautiful golden locks,

which the wind waved about his forehead when he chased his hoop! It is terrible! My dreams are horrible! My boy! my darling boy! He is so feeble that his poor little dry lips can no longer utter a word. His large eyes, that still light up now and then, smile upon me from time to time; but this smile is so soft and so faint that it seems a farewell! Farewell! But what would become of me?

No! no! I exaggerate, doubtless!

This morning, thinking him asleep, I could not suppress a sigh. His lips parted and he said to me, but so feebly that I had to place my ear close to him to catch the sound:

"You love me, mamma, do you not?"

Love him! It would kill me!

* * * * * * *

They advised me to come to Nice, but I feel no improvement. I grow weaker each day. I spit blood continually. And of what do they wish to cure me? If I never return to Paris, you will find in my bureau his last toys; the trace of his little fingers is still upon them. On the left side, you will see the branch of box-wood that hung from his bed. Let no other hands than your own touch these things. Burn these dear relics, these poor witnesses of vanished happiness! I can still see—ah! my sobs choke me!

Farewell, my friend. I have built too grand an edifice on too fragile a foundation! I have loved one being too well!

CHAPTER IV.

OLD RECOLLECTIONS—THE BABIES.

WRAP yourselves in your beautiful green leaves, vast groves with peaceful shadows. Steal through the branches, gay sunlight; you, studious promenaders, contemplative idlers, sprightly mammas, talkative nurses, brawling children and famished babies, take possession of your kingdom: these long alleys belong to you!

To-day is Sunday. Festivity and joy! The waffle-merchant opens his shop and prepares his warming-pans. The white cloth is spread upon the table and mountains of golden cakes attract the purchaser.

The woman who hires out chairs has donned her apron and great leather pockets for sous. The park-keeper, your bugbear, dear babies! has waxed his moustache, polished his innocent sword and put on his best uniform. See how bright and attractive are "Punch and Judy," as the sunbeams rest upon their painted awning!

Unhappy they to whom the huge trees of the Luxembourg Garden recall none of those souvenirs that cling to the heart like a perfume to the vase.

I was a general under those old trees, a general, plumed like a perfumery vender and armed to the

teeth. I commanded the entire region lying between the news-stand and the shop of the waffle-merchant. No modesty: my word was law even to the border of the basin, although the great white swans inspired me with dread. There were ambuscades behind the tree trunks, pickets behind the nurses, surprises, sword combats, battle-axe combats, attacks of sharp-shooters, dust, struggle, slaughter and not one drop of blood spilled! Then mamma wiped the perspiration from our foreheads, arranged our disordered hair and tore us from the battle of which we dreamed all night.

When I traverse this garden now, lingering in the midst of this army of babies and nurses, how my mind wanders back to the days when I wore my pasteboard helmet, my wooden sword, my plume and my pistol with a spring—for my pistol snapped. This was the cause of my rapid promotion.

Play, darling little children; chatter, buxom nurses, and scold your gallant firemen; embroider tranquilly, young mothers, as you ridicule your neighbors a trifle; and you, contemplative idlers, look upon this charming picture. Without the babies a garden is nothing!

They sport in the sand! The enjoyment is as old as the world, but always amusing. Mountains grow, and little bits of wood stuck in the side of a mound represent adorable English gardens, in the alleys of which the baby gravely puts his uncertain tiny feet. What would he not give, the dear little fellow, to be able to complete his work by constructing a basin in his park —a basin with an outlet and—three drops of water!

A little further on the soil is more humid. With a mighty effort, he pierces a tunnel in the side of the mountain—the work of a giant, which the boot of a passer-by annihilates in a moment. And what passer-by respects baby's mountain? But the little fellow has his revenge. See yonder gentleman in the maroon-colored coat, gravely reading his Revue des Deux Mondes; our toilers have accumulated around him great heaps of sand and dust—the skirts of his coat are already colorless.

But let us make way for this equipage that passes with shouts and noise. Four horses, two strings and a fifth horse for a driver. Nothing more than that—and they believe themselves in a post-chaise. How many countries they have seen this evening!

There are coachmen who would prefer being horses, and horses that would rather be coachmen; the first symptom of ambition.

And then the solitary baby, who slowly drags his omnibus around the waffle-merchants shop, eyeing the cakes as he passes! Indefatigable consumer, but bad pay!

Do you see, down there, under the plane trees, that throng of nurses, that herd of Burgundian milk-maids, and at their feet, rolling upon the grass, all those little red-cheeked philosophers, who ask of the good Lord nothing more than a ray of sunshine, pure milk and peace to be supremely happy?

This little world is charming; we love children, but

our affection for the species in general is changed very materially when it is a question not of the baby but of our baby!

I am a father, my dear Madame, but I have been a papa, and, of course, the papa of a love of a child. From beneath his cap escaped a lock of curly, flaxen hair that was our joy, and, when I touched his neck with the tip of my finger, he laughed heartily, showing his little, pearly teeth and taking my head in his two tiny hands.

His first tooth was an event. We raised the curtains in order to see better, and his grandparents brought their spectacles to bear upon this little white spot, while I, my neck outstretched, demonstrated, explained and proved—after which I ran, with all haste, into the cellar to seek, in a corner known to myself, a bottle of the choicest wine!

My boy's tooth! We spoke of his career during dinner, and at dessert grandma sang a song.

After this tooth came other teeth, and with them pains and tears; but then, when his little mouth was armed with a full set, how proudly he bit his bread, how vigorously he attacked his cutlet, in order to do like papa.

Like papa! You well know how these two words warm the heart, and how many misdeeds they cause you to pardon!

My greatest happiness—was it also yours?—was to wake my little one in the morning. I knew his hour.

I softly pushed aside the curtains of his cradle and, bending over him, awaited the opening of his pretty blue eyes.

Most frequently I found him lying diagonally across the bed, lost in the chaos of pillows and covers, his legs in the air and his arms crossed above his head; very often his dimpled fingers still clasped the toy with which he had played himself to sleep the evening before, and from between his half-open lips escaped the soft and regular murmur of his respiration. The warmth of his downy nest had given to his cheeks the hues of a ripe peach. His skin was warm, and the perspiration of the night stood upon his forehead in scarcely perceptible little pearls.

Very soon, however, he made a movement with his hand, his foot pushed back the covers and his entire body writhed; he rubbed his eyes, stretched out his arms and, then, his half-open eyes fixed themselves upon me.

He smiled on me as he murmured very low, so low that I held my breath to catch the tones of his baby-music:

"Dood morn'n, papa!"

"Good morning, my little man; you slept well last night, did you?"

Then we held out our arms to each other, and embraced like two old comrades.

And then the prattling commenced. He rattled on

as the larks sing at sunrise, and his chattering was interminable.

He told me his dreams, pausing after every phrase to ask for his panado "with lots of butter in it!" And when this good, steaming panado arrived, what laughter, what joy; how he sprang towards it as he grasped the curtains for support; his eye was all the brighter for the tear that stood in the corner, and the chattering recommenced.

Sometimes, he would come to surprise me in bed, and, when I pretended to be asleep, would pull my beard and shout in my ear. Then I feigned to be terribly frightened, and swore to be revenged. This was the signal for pillow-fights, barricades of bolsters, etc. In token of victory, I would then tickle him, and he, the darling, would give vent to frank and involuntary peals of laughter known only to innocent, happy childhood. He would draw in his head between his shoulders, in imitation of his toy tortoise, and menace me with his chubby, rosy foot. The skin of his heel was so fine that it might have put to the blush the cheeks of a young girl. How I covered those dear little feet with kisses, as I warmed his long night-gown before the fire in the evening!

They had forbidden me to undress him, under the pretext that I invariably entangled the strings of his gown, instead of undoing them.

All this was charming; but when I was forced to arrest the reckless course of his boyish freedom, his

little head sank upon his breast, his lips trembled and he strove manfully to suppress the flood of sparkling tears that gleamed under his long lashes.

How much courage it requires to resist the temptation to calm this storm with a kiss, to console this swelling little heart and to dry the tear that heralds the torrent!

And how touching is the expression of a child's face at this moment. There is so much pain in the warm tear that slowly trickles down the cheek, so much suffering in the contraction of the little muscles and in the rising and falling of the beloved breast!

But all this was long ago. Still the years have not been able to efface these sweet souvenirs, and now, though my baby is thirty and wears a great moustache, when he holds out his large hand, saying, in his bass voice: "Good morning, father!" it seems to me that an echo repeats, in the far distance, those cherished words of yore: "Dood morn'n, papa!"

CHAPTER V.

THE LITTLE BOOTS.

IN the morning, on leaving my room, I used to see his shoes carefully placed beside my own before the door. They were little, laced boots, rather worn and tarnished by the rough usage to which he subjected them. The soles were somewhat thin in places, and a little hole menaced the toe of the right foot. The strings, loose and limp, hung carelessly to the right and left. By the swelling of the leather, I could easily recognize the position occupied by his great and little toes, and all the accustomed movements of his foot had left their traces either in deep or almost imperceptible indentations.

Why has memory clung to all this? I really know not, but I can still see my dear boy's boots ambitiously placed by my own—two grains of sand beside two paving stones, a gold-finch in company with an elephant! They were his "every-day" boots; his play companions, with which he traversed his sand-mountains and explored the depths of the neighboring pools of water. Their existence was so devoted to and partook so much of his own that something of himself seemed to have been transferred to them: to me they appeared to possess a peculiar physiognomy; I felt that

an invisible bond attached them to him, and I could not look upon their still undecided form, so comically graceful, without thinking of their master and avowing that they resembled him.

Everything that comes in contact with babies grows a little babyish also, and becomes characterized by that awkward grace peculiar to them.

Beside these laughing, gay, good-humored little boots, demanding but to scour the fields, my own appeared monstrous, heavy, gross and absurd, with their gigantic heels. Looking upon them, as they stood there, with heavy, undeceived aspect, one could not but feel that for them life was grave, the road long and the burden to be borne altogether serious.

The contrast was marked and the lesson profound. I used to approach these tiny boots very gently, in order not to wake the little man who still slept soundly in the adjoining chamber. I used to tap them, turn them over and over as I examined them on all sides, and I felt a delicious smile mount from my heart to my lips. The old glove, perfumed with violet, which I have so long kept hidden in the most secret depths of my drawer, never filled my soul with so sweet an emotion.

Paternal love is not a passing affection cast upon the winds; it has its follies and its weakness — it is either puerile or sublime. It never analyzes itself and never seeks to explain its emotions: it makes itself felt; and I allowed myself to drift with its delicious current.

Let the papa who is without weakness cast the first stone at me—the mammas will avenge me.

Remember that this little, laced boot recalled to my mind a tiny, dimpled foot, to which were attached a thousand cherished souvenirs.

I can still see my dear boy sitting upon my knee as I cut his finger nails; how he struggled and pulled my beard, laughing in spite of himself, for he was ticklish.

I can still see him when, in the evening, beside the bright, warm fire, I removed his little stockings. How delightful it was!

I used to say: "One—two—" And he, enveloped in his vast night-gown, his hands lost in the sleeves, which were by far too long, with sparkling eyes and ready to burst out laughing, awaited the glorious three!

At length, after a thousand delays, after a thousand attempts at teasing which excited his impatience and gave me an opportunity to steal five or six kisses, I cried: "*Three!*"

The stocking flew to the further end of the room. Then it was a veritable pleasure: he threw himself back into my arms, and his bare legs cleft the air. From his wide-open mouth, in which I could see two rows of brilliant little pearls, escaped a cascade of hearty and sonorous laughter.

His mother, who laughed also, would say to him, after an instant or two:

"Come, baby; come, my angel; you will catch cold! Hold him! Will you be quiet, little wretch!"

Then she would wish to scold him, but could not

suppress the unmistakable smile upon her lips. And who could have looked serious in the presence of that flaxen head of hair, of those rosy cheeks, flushed and happy, and of those babylips that opened but to vent his little heart in peals of merry laughter, as he bounded upon my knee?

My wife turned towards me, saying:

"He is intolerable! Great heavens! what a child!" But I understood very well that she meant: "Look how pretty, how healthy and how happy he is, our little man, our darling baby!"

And in truth he was adorable; at least, I thought so!

I was wise enough — I may say it now that my hair is white — not to let pass a single one of those joyful moments without enjoying it amply; and, truly, I did well. Let us pity those fathers who know not how to be papas as often as possible, who never roll upon the carpet, never play at hide-and-seek, never imitate the barking of dogs or the roaring of lions, never bite with all their might without doing harm, or hide behind the arm-chair, taking care the while to let themselves be seen!

Let us sincerely pity those poor unfortunate ones! These are not only childish and agreeable pastimes that they neglect, they are real joys, delicious pleasures; they are trifles that, taken together, compose that happiness which so many persons slander and accuse of existing only in the imagination, because

they expect it to fall from heaven in the form of an ingot when it is beneath our very feet, in pieces which need only to be gathered up. Let us then gather these little fragments, and learn to drop our continual cry of complaint; every day brings its bread and portion of happiness!

Let us walk slowly, with our eyes, now and then, fixed upon the ground; let us look around and peer into the little corners; it is there that Providence hides the treasures!

I have always laughed at those persons who go through life with the reins slackened, the nostrils dilated and the eyes fastened upon the horizon. It seems that the present burns their feet, and if you say to them: "Stop an instant, let your feet tread upon the earth, and take a glass of this good old wine; let us chat awhile, smile a second and embrace our children!" they reply: "Impossible; we are awaited down there. Down there, we shall chat; down there, we shall drink delicious wine; down there, we shall give ourselves up to paternal tenderness; down there, we shall be happy!" And when they have arrived down there, breathless and broken, when they cry out, claiming the reward of their fatigues, the present laughs under her spectacles, saying: "Gentlemen, the safe is locked up!"

The future promises, but the present pays, and we must cultivate the acquaintance of the cashier who holds the keys of the safe!

Why imagine that we are the dupes of Providence? Do you suppose that this good Providence has sufficient leisure to serve each one of us with perfect happiness, deliciously cooked, already cut and prepared upon a plate of gold, and, moreover, to tickle our ears with sweet strains of music during the repast? A great many persons do expect it, however!

We must be reasonable, roll up our sleeves, cook our own food and not expect heaven to make our pot boil.

I thought of all this, in the evening, when my boy lay in my arms and his regular, moist breath came against my hand. I thought of all the happy moments which I already owed to the little man, and I was thankful to him for them.

"How simple it is," said I to myself, "to be happy—and what a strange idea it is to seek this happiness in China!"

My wife entertained the same opinion, and we remained hours at a time before the bright fire, speaking of that of which our hearts were full.

"Do you not perceive, my dear," she often said, "that your love is of an entirely different nature from mine? Papas calculate. Their affection is like a trade. They never love their children well until their egotism is flattered. There is something of the proprietor in the papa. You can analyze your paternal affection, discover its causes and say: 'I love my child because it is thus and thus.' For the mamma, this analysis is an impossibility. She does not love her

child because it is pretty or ugly, intelligent or absurd, because it resembles her or does not resemble her, or because it has her gestures and tastes or does not have them. She loves it because she cannot do otherwise; with her, it is a necessity. Maternal love is an innate feeling in woman. In men, paternal love is the result of circumstances. With her, it is an instinct; with him, it is an involuntary calculation, but, at the same time, the result of various other feelings!"

"Oh! very well," I replied; "speak your mind. We have neither heart nor soul, we men; we are blood-thirsty cannibals. Terrible sentiments, those!" And I plunged the poker into the fire with a violence that caused the sparks to fly in every direction.

And yet I could not but acknowledge that my wife was right. When a child makes its entrance into the world, the mother's affection cannot be compared to that of the father. With her, it is already love. It seems that she has known her darling a long time. She seems to say: "It is he." She takes him to her without embarrassment, her gestures are easy and unconstrained, and, folded in her arms, the baby finds a place exactly to his measure—a soft, warm nest made expressly for him, in which he sleeps in happiness. It really seems as if woman had served a mysterious apprenticeship to maternity. Men, on the contrary, are plunged into deep trouble on the birth of an infant. The first cry of the baby touches them; but there is more astonishment than love in this emotion. The

father's affection is not yet born. His heart has need of reflecting upon and habituating itself to this tenderness which is entirely new to him.

An apprenticeship must be served to the art of being a papa; there is none to that of being a mamma.

If the father is awkward in loving his new-born baby, we must acknowledge that he is none the less awkward in handling it.

Trembling and with a thousand contortions, a thousand efforts, he succeeds in raising this insignificant weight. He is afraid of breaking the puppet; his puppetship is aware of the fact and brawls accordingly. He exerts more muscular force in raising this child, poor man, than would be necessary to shatter his front-door. If he kiss it, his beard pricks its face; if he touch it, his fingers hurt the delicate being. He has the air of a bear attempting to thread a needle!

And yet, this little baby must gain the affection of its poor father, who, at first, meets only with misadventures; it must win him, enchant him, cause him to conceive a love for his position, and not force him to endure his rôle of conscript too long!

Nature has provided for this, and the papa is advanced to the rank of corporal the day his baby stammers its first syllables.

And how sweet is this first effort to speak, and how admirably chosen, how well calculated to touch the heart of the father is the first word: papa! Is it

strange that the very first word of a human being expresses precisely the most profound and tender of all feelings?

Is it not touching to see this little being find, without assistance, that one word which must surely gain the affection of him of whom it has the greatest need?—that word which says: "I am your own; love me, give me a place in your heart, stretch out your arms to me; you see that I know nothing as yet; I have just landed in the world, and think of you already; I am one of your family, I shall eat of your food and bear your name—pa—pa—pa—pa."

He has found at once the most delicate of all flatteries, the sweetest of all affections. He enters the world with a master-stroke.

Ah! the beloved darling! Pa—pa—pa—pa. I can still hear his hesitating little voice and still see his tiny red lips rise and fall. We were on our knees, in a circle around him, and even then we towered above him like giants. We said to him: "Say that again, little man, say that again! Where is your papa?"

And he, cheered by the bright faces around him, turned his eyes towards me and held out his little arms.

Oh! how I embraced the darling. My voice was choked with tears.

From this moment I was a papa, seriously a papa!

I had been baptized!

CHAPTER VI.

BABIES AND PAPAS.

WHEN the baby has reached the age of three or four years, when his sex becomes apparent in his gestures, his tastes and his eyes, when he shatters his wooden horses, disembowels his drummers, blows his trumpets, breaks the castors and evinces a noisy hostility to everything in the shape of dishes—when, in a word, he shows himself to be a boy—it is then that the father's affection for his son assumes the aspect of veritable love. He feels himself seized upon by a desire for a special affection, of which the sweetest souvenirs of his past life can convey no adequate idea. It is a deep-seated feeling, the numberless roots of which enwrap the heart and penetrate its innermost recesses. Faults or virtues, these roots penetrate the heart and nourish themselves upon it. Hence we find in paternal tenderness all the weakness and all the grandeur of humanity. Vanity, abnegation, pride and disinterestedness are there united, and the man in his entirety appears in the papa.

The day the infant becomes a mirror in which are reflected all the father's features, the papa's heart is moved and trembles. Life is divided; he is no longer one, but one and a half; he feels his importance

increase and, in the future of this little being who belongs to him, he reconstructs his past. He revives and is born again in his offspring. He says to himself: "I will spare him such and such a chagrin which I experienced; I will remove from his path such and such a stone that caused me to stumble; I will show him the road that leads to happiness, and he shall owe all to me. He shall, thanks to me, be full of charms and talent." He gives his boy, in advance, all that he has never had, and, with his son's future laurels, arranges a little crown for himself.

Human weakness! No doubt; but what of that, if the feeling produced by this weakness is the strongest and purest of all! Should we be condemned for being generous through egotism—for devoting ourselves to the happiness of others in the hope of thereby being made happy ourselves?

But the vibrating chord in the father's breast is vanity. Say to a papa:

"Heavens! how much your son resembles you!" Your remark will be well received. He will hesitate a moment to say yes, poor man, but I defy him not to smile. He will reply:

"Perhaps— Ah! you think so? Well, yes; his profile is like mine."

But do not be deceived if he speak in this manner: he expects you to be astonished and to reply, emphatically:

"Why, my dear fellow, the child is your very image!"

Then he is happy, and his happiness is easily explained. Is not this resemblance a visible bond between himself and his child? Is it not his title of possession, a proof of his rights?

To this physical resemblance soon succeeds a moral resemblance, and one that is very differently charming. The papa is moved to tears upon the recognition of the first efforts of this little intelligence to grasp his ideas. It accepts them and nourishes itself upon them, but without question, without examination. Little by little are developed in the child the father's tastes, habits and bearing. He imitates his coarse voice in order to be like papa, asks for his braces, sighs before his huge boots and sits in admiration before his hat. He protects mamma during her promenade, scolds the big dog although it fills him with fear—and all this to be like papa. Have you never observed your boy as he sits at table, his large eyes fixed upon you, his mouth open and his spoon in his hand? He is studying your visage and copying his model with an expression of astonishment and respect that baffles description. Listen to his little prattling; it is as rambling as his mind —he says:

"When I shall have grown to be as large as papa, I shall have a moustache and a cane like him; I shall not be afraid at night, because it is very foolish to be afraid when one is a man like papa; and then I will say by thunder—for I shall be big!"

"Baby! What are you talking about, Monsieur Baby?"

"Why, I am only talking like papa!"

Could a mirror be more faithful? For him, you are an ideal, an end, the type of all that is great, strong, beautiful and intelligent.

Very often, he deceives himself, the dear little fellow; but his error is all the more charming for being sincere, all the more delicious because you feel yourself unworthy of so pure an admiration; and you console yourself with the thought that he is unconscious of your imperfections.

The faults of children are almost always the result of impressions made by fathers; they are the consequence of a too faithful imitation. Should we warn them? Yes, doubtless; but what moral courage must this poor man possess, I ask you, to banish the illusions of his baby, to shatter, with a single word, the innocent confidence of his admirer, to say, frankly: "My child, I am imperfect; I am full of faults which you must avoid!"

This species of devotion of the child to its father reminds me of a charming expression employed by one of my little companions. On crossing the street, the little fellow perceived a policeman; he examined him respectfully, and, turning to me, after a moment of reflection: "Monsieur," said he, with an air of conviction: "Papa is stronger than all the policemen, is he not?"

Had I replied that he was not, our friendly relations would have ended then and there.

Is it not charming?

We may positively say: As is the baby, so is the papa. Our life is the threshold of his. It is through our eyes that he first sees everything.

Take advantage, young fathers, of your dear baby's first moments of candor; seek to enter his little heart while it is yet open, stamp your love and likeness there so indelibly that, when he is old enough to judge of your actions, his affection for you will be too deep to admit of a severe judgment and of his being no longer your own. Gain his affection and you will be compensated for your trouble.

To be loved all your life by a being whom you love! — that is the problem towards the solution of which all your efforts should tend. To make yourself beloved is to amass treasures of happiness for the coming winter. Each year will rob you of a particle of life and contract the circle of interests and pleasures in which you live; little by little, your mind will lose its vigor and demand repose, and, in proportion as you live less in the mind, you will live more in the heart. The affection of others, which at first was but an agreeable adjunct, will become a necessity, and, whatever you may have been, statesmen or artists, soldiers or bankers, when your hair is white you will be only papas!

But filial love does not spring into being, like the fungus, in a single night. The voice of the blood is more poetic than real. The affection of children is

gained by being merited; it is a consequence, not a cause, and gratitude is the commencement of it. Therefore, your baby must be grateful, cost what it may. Do not deceive yourself with the thought that he will be thankful to you for your solicitude, for your dreams of his future, for the expenses of his infancy which you have paid, or for the superb inheritance you are preparing for him; such gratitude requires a calculation altogether too complicated for his little mind, and is, moreover, based upon social ideas as yet altogether foreign to him. He will not be thankful to you for the supreme affection you entertain for him, but do not be surprised and call this ingratitude! You must, first of all, lead him to comprehend your affection, to appreciate and judge it, before responding to it; he must know his notes before he can charm your ears with delicious harmonies.

The little fellow's gratitude will be, at first, but an egotistic, natural and plain calculation. If you have made him laugh or amused him, he will wish to recommence and will hold out his little arms to you, crying: "Again!" The recollection of the pleasures you have afforded him will impress itself deeply upon his little mind, and he will very soon think: "No one amuses me as much as papa; it is he who throws me into the air, plays hide-and-seek with me and tells me pretty stories!" And, little by little, gratitude will be born in him, as thanks rise to the lips of one whom we have made happy.

Therefore, learn the art of amusing your baby: imitate the crowing of the cock; roll with him upon the floor; reply as best you can to his thousand questions that are but the echoes of his endless dreams; let him pull your beard and do not be afraid to play cuckoo in the corners. There is affection in all this, but also cunning; and good King Henry did not give the lie to his subtile policy when he crawled on all fours upon his carpet.

Your paternal authority will, doubtless, thereby lose its austere prestige, but you will gain by it that deep and lasting influence yielded by affection. Your baby will fear you less, but he will love you more. Where then is the harm?

Fear nothing; become his comrade in some degree, that you may remain his friend. Hide your paternal authority as the detective hides his badge, ask kindly that which you might demand without circumlocution, and expect everything of his heart, if you have been wise enough to gain its love. Carefully avoid those harsh terms, discipline, passive obedience and command; let his submission bear lightly upon him and his obedience resemble tenderness. Renounce the silly pleasure of imposing your caprices upon him and of giving orders for the sake of proving your infallibility.

Children possess a keenness of judgment and a delicacy of impression incredible to those who have not studied their characters. Justice and equity are easily born in their minds, for they are, above all things, absolutely logical. Take advantage of all this. There are

unjust and harsh words that engrave themselves at the bottom of a child's heart and remain there his whole life long. Remember there is in your baby that which will some day be a man, whose love will be the light of your old age; respect him, that he may respect you, and rest assured that not one seed, thrown into this little heart, will fail to produce its fruit.

But there are unmanageable children, I hear you say, children who rebel even in the cradle. Are you altogether certain that the first word they heard in life was not the cause of their evil inclinations? Revolt is always preceded by awkward oppression—I do not wish to believe in innate vice. In the midst of evil instincts, there is always one good one, at least, that may be used as an effective weapon against all the rest. This requires an extreme tenderness, I acknowledge, and, moreover, perfect tact and boundless confidence; but is not the recompense sweet? To conclude, I believe that a father's first kiss, his first look and his first caresses have an untold influence upon the life of his offspring.

To love is well. To know how to love is everything.

No papa can pass a throng of these little fellows without being touched and loving them. Dirty and ragged or carefully dressed, running along the hot road and wallowing in the dust or jumping the rope in the gardens of the Tuileries, paddling among the half-feathered ducklings that cry quack, quack, or making sand mountains around sprightly mammas, the dear babies are adorable. All have the same grace, the

same embarrassed gestures, the same comical seriousness, the same candor and the same indifference as to the effect produced; in short, the same charm, that charm which we call childhood, and which no one can understand without loving it; a charm difficult to define, but one that is found in all nature, from the half-open flower, from the dawning day, to the babe that has just made its entrance into life.

The baby is by no means an incomplete being, an unfinished sketch—it is a man. Look at it more closely, follow each one of its movements; they will reveal to you a logical progress of ideas and a marvellous power of imagination to be found in no other stage of life. There is more real poetry in the minds of these little darlings than in twenty epic poems. Unaccustomed as they are to the world, they are in a state of continual surprise; yet in vigor and aptitude, these fresh, innocent little intelligences have no equals; how sensible they are to the slightest impressions, and how readily they break their way through the to them, wonderful unknown!

And what work they accomplish in a few months! They perceive sounds, classify them and understand that certain sounds are words and that these words are thoughts; they discover, without assistance, the meaning of everything, distinguish the true from the false, the real from the imaginary; they correct, by observation, the errors of their too ardent imaginations, unravel a chaos; and, during this titanic labor, loosen the tongue, strengthen their tottering limbs and, in

one word, render themselves men. If there ever was a curious spectacle, it is that of this tiny being marching to the conquest of the world! As yet, he knows neither fear nor doubt, and opens his little heart in all its fulness. There is a Don Quixote in the baby. He is as comical as the great knight, but has also his sublime aspects.

Let us not laugh too heartily at the hesitations, the numberless gropings and the unheard-of follies of this budding mind that soars, on the wings of a butterfly, into the passing clouds, and for which the grains of sand are mountains—a mind that comprehends the twittering of birds, and for which flowers have thoughts and puppets souls. Moreover, does not this little imagination indulge in dreams of that far distant land where the trees are of sugar, the fields of chocolate and the rivers of sirup? Does it not look upon Father Punch and Mother Judy as powerful personages of undoubted reality, who people the silence and animate the night? Let us not laugh too heartily at this little darling. His life is a dream, and the name of his errors is poesy!

You will find this touching poesy in the infancy of man, and you will find it also in the infancy of nations. It is the same in both cases. There are, in the one as in the other, the same need of idealization and the same tendency to personify the unknown. Indeed, we may venture the assertion that between Punch and Jupiter, between Judy and Venus, there is not the difference of the breadth of a hair!

CHAPTER VII.

FIRST BREECHES.

THE supreme desire of the child is to become a man. But the first symptom of virility, the first serious step made in the voyage of life is marked by the use of breeches.

The first breeches are an event which papa desires and which mamma fears. To the mother they seem the commencement of abandonment. It is with a tear in her eye that she sees the long clothes thrown aside forever. "Alas!" she sighs, "and are the first days of infancy past? Already my rôle is well nigh played! He is about to develop new tastes and new desires; even now he is no longer my own; his individuality is apparent—he is somebody—he is a boy!"

On the other hand, the father is delighted. He laughs beneath his moustache, as he looks upon the tiny calves that project from the pantaloons, and pats the little body, the outline of which is so clearly defined by the new garment. "How well the rascal is built!" he says to himself. "Like me, he will have broad shoulders and firm hips. How manfully he puts down his little foot!" He would be but too well pleased to see him in high boots; he is almost tempted to buy the little fellow spurs. He begins to perceive something

of himself in this being who is his own flesh and blood; he looks upon him with different eyes and, for the first time, finds an extreme charm in calling him "my boy!"

As to the baby, he is giddy, glorious and triumphant, although his legs and arms are somewhat embarrassed, and, be it said without any wish to offend him, he bears a rather striking resemblance to those little poodles that have been clipped on the approach of summer. That which troubles the poor little man most is his past. How many serious men are tortured by the same thing! He understands very well that breeches bring obligations with them; that he must now assume a different bearing, cultivate new tastes and speak in a new tone of voice; he begins to study the movements of his father, who is by no means displeased thereby; he awkwardly attempts masculine gestures; and this struggle between his past and present renders his bearing, for a time, excessively ludicrous. He is pursued by the phantom of his petticoats, and this phantom enrages him.

First breeches, how I love you! for you are a faithful friend, presenting at every step in life yourself and your train of sweet recollections. Are you not the living image of the new illusions that flatter our vanity? You, my good officer, who still measure your moustache in the mirror and have just donned your epaulets and gilded belt, for the first time, tell me what are your sensations when, on descending the stair-

way, you hear the scabbard of your sword beating tic, toc, tac on the steps! And, again, what are your sensations when, belted, combed and booted, your elbows projecting and your cap on your ear, you find yourself in the midst of the busy throng in the wide street, and, borne by an irresistible force towards the apothecary's windows, you contemplate your reflection in the large, colored bottles? Will you dare to say that you have never stopped before these bottles?

First breeches, my dear Lieutenant, first breeches!

You will again recognize the joyful breeches, when you are advanced to the dignity of captain and decorated. And, later, when you are an old grumbler with a white moustache and take to yourself a young companion to rejuvenate your old age, you will wear these beloved first breeches once more!

But the day you have discarded them forever, my good officer, ah! that day you will be of very small account, for all the joys of life are concentrated in this precious garment. Existence itself is nothing more than this: to don the first breeches, take them off, draw them on again, and die looking at them.

Is it then true that most of our joys have no more serious foundation than those of children? Are we really so innocent? Good heavens! yes, Monsieur; we are of a simplicity beyond belief. We never entirely rid ourselves of our swaddling-clothes; something of them always clings to us. There is something of the baby in every one of us, or, to express it more plainly, we are nothing but grown-up babies.

Do you see that young lawyer, slowly promenading in the hall? He is cleanly shaven; beneath the ample folds of his new robe is hidden a mountain of documents, and on his head, full of mighty thoughts, is placed a jaunty hat which he bought yesterday and which he has coquettishly indented with a stroke of his hand. This young man is happy; in the midst of the general tumult, he distinguishes the echo of his footsteps, and the sonorous clatter of his boots sounds to him like the music of Notre-Dame. In a few moments, he will find a pretext for descending the great stairway and crossing the court-yard in full costume. You may rest assured that he will not remove his professional dress before going to dinner. How much joy there is beneath those five mètres of black lustring, how much happiness beneath that ugly cloth stretched over pasteboard!

First breeches, my dear advocate, first breeches!

And you, Madame, how much pleasure do you not find in donning, every season, the garments dictated by the caprice of fashion? Do not say, I beseech you, that this pleasure is a secondary consideration, for these garments have an absolute influence upon your humor and character. Why, I ask you, did you discover so much irresistible logic and persuasive eloquence in the sermon of the reverend Father Paul? Why did you weep on leaving church and kiss your husband as you entered the house? You know better than I, Madame, that you wore your coquettish little, yellow bonnet,

that morning, and that your pretty face is irresistibly charming beneath these delicate shades of satin. These impressions cannot be explained, but they are, nevertheless, invincible; there is a little childishness in all this, you will acknowledge, but a childishness one cannot thrust aside—as a proof of which, recollect, if you please, that, on going to the church of Saint-Thomas, the other evening, to hear the sermon of the reverend Father Nicolas, one of our most brilliant lights, you experienced feelings of a very different nature; a general discontent, various doubts and a nervous irritability seized upon you at each phrase of the orator; your soul was not content; you left the church with an uneasy step, suffering from a severe headache and cold feet, and, on getting into your carriage, you even forgot yourself so far as to declare that the reverend Father Nicolas possessed not the remotest idea of eloquence. Your coachman overheard the remark. Finally, on entering your house, you thought your parlor deplorably small and your husband miserably stout.

And why this train of disagreeable impressions, I ask you again? If you will have the kindness to tax your memory for an instant, dear Madame, you will recollect that, on that evening, you wore, for the first time, your horrible little violet bonnet, which was such a complete failure!

First breeches, my dear Madame, first breeches!

Do you wish a final example? Observe Monsieur your husband. Yesterday, he left the house in a most

disagreeable mood—his breakfast did not suit him at all — but, about seven o'clock in the evening, he returned from the Chamber joyous, contented, a smile upon his lips and good humor beaming in his eyes. He kissed you warmly upon the forehead, threw with an easy gesture a bundle of pamphlets and documents upon the stand, sat down at table, found the soup delicious and devoured his supper with unaccustomed relish. "What can be the matter with my husband?" you said. Allow me to explain: your husband spoke yesterday for the first time. He said (the assembly was greatly animated, for an infernal question was being elucidated on the left)—he said (raising his voice above the din, and striking his paper-cutter upon his desk)—he said: "But we cannot hear!" And as these words were received with general approbation, while on all sides arose cries of: "Well said!—capital! You are right!—Good!—Very good!" he gave his idea a more parliamentary form and added: "The voice of the honorable orator does not reach us!"

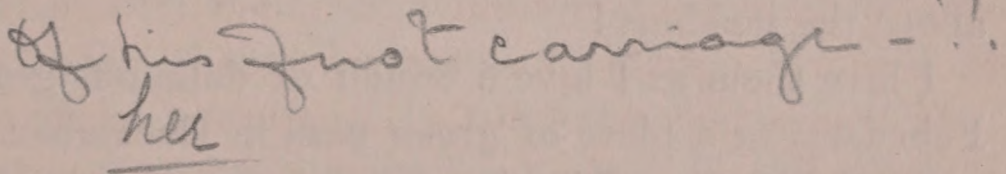
It was a matter of little importance, perhaps, and the amendment might have been dispensed with; but, at all events, it was a step forward—in truth, it was a triumph, for Monsieur your husband, during the last six years, has habitually postponed from day to day his first speech in the Chamber. Hence you have a happy deputy, Madame, a deputy who has just drawn on his first breeches!

What matter whether the cause be trifling or serious,

if the blood circulates more rapidly, if one feels happy, or if one is proud of himself? To win a great victory or to put on a new bonnet is about the same thing, dear Madame, if the bonnet cause as much joy as the crown of laurels!

Therefore, let us not laugh too heartily at the baby, if his first breeches intoxicate him with joy, or, if, in wearing them, he imagines his shadow to be much longer and the trees less gigantic! He is beginning to be a man, the dear child; nothing more!

And of how many things has not humanity been vain, since the world has been a world? Under the Cavalier King, one was proud of his nose; in the "great century," one was proud of his periwig, and, later, of his appetite and corpulence. One is vain of his wife, of his idleness, of his genius, of his stupidity, of the beard on his chin, of the cravat about his neck and of the hump on his back!



CHAPTER VIII.

COUNTRY BABIES, DUCKLINGS AND LITTLE CHICKENS.

I LOVE the babies that run beneath the grand old trees in the gardens of the Tuileries; I love them well, the pretty little baby-girls with their long, golden hair, their tightly drawn stockings and intractable crinolines. I love to follow with the eye all the movements of these sprightly dressed little puppets, already coquettes and pouting as they cling to their mammas' skirts. It seems to me that I can perceive in them a thousand charming faults, as yet but in the bud. But all these little women and men in miniature appear to me like adorable monstrosities, as they stand there in the shade, exchanging postage stamps and chatting about the fashions!

I love them as I love a bunch of delicious grapes in February, or a plate of green peas in December.

In the realm of babies, my preferred friend is the baby of the fields that runs barefooted and ragged along the dusty road or seeks blackbirds' and chaffinches' nests on the outskirts of the wood. I adore his great black eyes that stare at you in astonishment from behind his unkempt locks; I adore his firm little flesh bronzed by the sun, his dark brow hidden beneath a mass of refractory hair, his besmeared face and his

picturesque breeches that the paternal braces prevent from falling to the ground, held by a large metal button—the gift of a gendarme.

Ah! the fine breeches!—the legs are not long enough, to be sure, but as to the rest, what amplitude! The little savage might hide his entire body in this immense rest, through a large rent in which escapes a bit of shirt, floating like a flag—I was about to say a white flag! These good breeches preserve souvenirs of all the garments of the family: here is a piece of the maternal skirt, there a remnant of a yellow vest, and, in another spot, a fragment of a blue pocket-handkerchief, the whole held together by thread possessing the double advantage of being seen from a distance and not breaking.

But beneath this patched garment there is a solid little body, and what difference do the garments make after all? The baby of the fields is by no means coquettish, and when the stage-coach descends the hill with a noise of tiny bells and he feels it his duty to bound off in pursuit of it, overturn his companions, fall with them in the dust and roll in the ditches, of what possible use could knee-breeches and a pair of silk stockings be to this dear little creature?

I love these babies also because they are wild, are frightened and scamper away at your approach like a troop of playful young rabbits, surprised in the morning among the wild thyme. It requires the employment of a thousand cunning artifices to triumph over

their timidity and gain their confidence. But if you succeed at last, thanks to your prudence, in getting among them, the games cease, the shouts of laughter are hushed, and the little troop remain motionless and scratch their heads, while every uneasy eye stares at you fixedly. This is the delicate moment.

A harsh word or an ill-chosen gesture may set you at odds with them forever, just as a good, frank expression, a smile or a caress will speedily achieve their conquest. And, believe me, this conquest is worth the trouble.

One of my greatest allurements was this: I drew my watch from my fob and looked at it attentively. Thereupon I perceived that my little audience stretched their necks, opened wide their eyes and advanced a step or two towards me, and it very often happened that the little chickens, ducklings and geese that were idling in the grass near by imitated their comrades and approached me also.

Then I placed my watch to my ear, and smiled like a man who is being told a secret.

In the presence of this prodigy, the little fellows could hold out no longer; they regarded one another with that cunning, innocent, timid and mocking look which must be seen to be understood. They approached this time for good and, when I offered my watch to the boldest in the throng that he might hear too, he drew back in fear, although with a smile upon his lips, whereupon the entire troop burst into joyous laughter;

the ducklings flapped their wings, the geese hissed and the little chickens cried cuik, cuik; they were vanquished, one and all.

How many times have I played this comedy, seated in the shade of the old willows that border the little stream that sings for joy as it winds its way over the white pebbles and among the trembling reeds!

The warm sun beamed on the meadow, and around us thousands of gay insects filled the air with their monotonous buzzing, while the flowers of the field swooned upon their stalks, and, in the distance, the bluish poplars nodded about the belfry.

The little throng pressed around me in order to listen to the watch, and very soon questions without number were asked in chorus amid peals of laughter. They inspected my gaiters, plunged their tiny fingers into the depths of my pockets and leaned their elbows upon my knees; the ducklings got between my boots and the great geese tickled me in the back.

How one enjoys not frightening beings that everything causes to tremble!

I remained motionless, fearing lest my slightest movement might put an end to their joy. I was like a child who constructs a card-castle and has arrived at the third story. But I regarded all these happy little heads clearly defined against the blue sky; I watched the sunbeams making their way through their thickets of golden hair, or spreading out like a large golden écu upon their brown little necks. I followed all their

awkwardly graceful gestures, and sat down upon the grass in order to be in closer proximity to them. If some unskilful little chicken stumbled and fell between two daisies, I quickly stretched out my hand and set it upon its feet.

And I assure you that my audience thanked me for the deed. Love this little world, and one thing will impress itself forcibly upon your mind:

The duckling that quacks at the water's edge or tumbles head over heels into the porringer, the young plant that pushes its chilly leaves out of the soil, the tiny chickens that trot before the mamma hen, and the babies that stumble in the long grass—all these little things resemble one another. They are the children of Mother Nature, have a common code and a common physiognomy; there is about them a comically graceful, awkward and tender something that causes one to love them at first sight; they are relatives, friends and comrades under the same flag—a pink and white flag that we salute when it passes, old graybeards that we are! for it is blessed and is called Childhood!

All these babies are plump, supple, feeble, timid and downy to the touch as a handful of wadding. Protected by cushions of rosy flesh or by a covering of soft down, they dash along, tumbling, rolling, shaking their little fists in the air or agitating their featherless wings. See them spread themselves out pell-mell in the sunshine regardless of any distinction of species, gorging themselves with milk or poultry feed, and dare to say that they do not resemble each other!

Who knows if all these children of Nature have not a common starting-point—if they are not brothers of the same principle?

Who knows if the source of life is not the same? Providence animates an oak, a chicken or a man; but who will tell me that these three life-giving breaths differ? Who will tell me that the same cause has not produced so many different effects?

Taught by men with green spectacles, we are pleased to ticket the beings of this earth; we arrange them, divide them into categories, class them and dispose of them, like the careful apothecary who wishes to have order among his drugs. It is no trifling matter to place each one in its proper drawer, and I have heard not unfrequently that certain subjects remain upon the counter on account of belonging to two drawers at once.

And, then, who will assure me that these drawers exist at all? Who will assert that the entire creation is not one family, the members of which differ in trifling nothings, which we, in our ignorance, suppose to be everything?

Have you demonstrated the existence of these drawers and compartments? Have you seen the iron bars of these imaginary cages in which you imprison the species and the genera?

Are there not infinite varieties that escape your analysis and are, as it were, the missing link that unites in one chain all the various particles of the animated

world? Why say: To these eternity — to the others nothingness? Why say: This is the slave — that the king? Strange hardihood for persons ignorant of so much!

Man, animal or plant, the being quivers, suffers or enjoys, exists, and encloses within itself the trace of the same mystery. Who will tell me that this mystery, which is everywhere the same, is not the stamp of a common parentage, is not the sign of a great law of which we are ignorant?

This is but a dream you will say. But what does Science herself do, when the spy-glasses become clouded and the compass loses its power? She dreams also—she supposes!

Let us also suppose, then, that the tree is a man with a rough skin, a silent dreamer that loves too, in its own fashion, and trembles down to its roots when, at evening, the warm breezes, charged with the fragrance of the fields, whisper in its verdant hair and inundate it with kisses.

No; I do not accept the hypothesis of a world created expressly for us. Puerile pride that it is, it would be absurd if its simplicity did not lend it a certain poetry.

Man is by no means a goal, a total, an end: he is one of the links of that immense chain the two ends of which we know nothing about.

And is it not consoling to dream that man is not an isolated monarch to whom the rest of creation serves

as a footstool, that he is not a licensed destroyer, not a poor, feeble tyrant protected by arbitrary decrees, but rather the necessary note in an infinite harmony—to dream that the law of life is the same in all immensity, and that it shines upon worlds in the same manner in which it shines upon cities and ant-hills—to dream that each vibration in our own being is the echo of vibrations in others—to dream of an unique principle, of a primordial axiom—to think that the universe wraps us about as a mother wraps her arms around her infant, and to say to one's self: "I am his and he is mine; he would cease to be but for me, and I without him could exist no longer;" in a word, to see nothing save the divine unity of laws which cannot but be, where others have beheld only sovereign fancy and the caprice of an individual?

It is a dream! Perhaps; but I have often dreamed it as I watched the village babies rolling upon the tender grass amid the ducklings.

CHAPTER IX.

AUTUMN. CABBAGE SOUP AND HEAVY RAINS.

ARE you acquainted with autumn, dear reader, autumn in the open fields with its sudden and violent storms, its long sighs, its yellow leaves that whirl in the distance, its soft roads, its beautiful sunsets pale as a sick man's smile and its pools of water in the highways? Are you acquainted with all this?

If you have seen all these things, you have not remained indifferent to them. One either loves or detests them madly.

I am one of those who love them, and I would give two summers for an autumn. I adore the huge flames; I love to take refuge by the fireside, with my dog between my damp gaiters. I love to see the high flames that lick the old andirons and illumine the black depths of the chimney. One hears the wind hissing in the barn, the great door creak, the watch-dog howl and tug at its chain, and, in spite of the noise of the forest that near by roars as it curves its back, one distinguishes the lugubrious croakings of a flock of crows as they struggle against the tempest. The rain dashes against the windows, and one thinks of those without, as he stretches his legs towards the fire. One thinks of the mariners, of the old doctor in his little gig, the

curtains of which flap as the wheels sink into the deep ruts and the gray mare neighs against the blast! One thinks of the two gendarmes from whose hats the water pours in floods; one can see them shivering, bent and wet, as they pass along the path through the vineyards, seated on their horses covered by their huge blue cloaks. One thinks of the delayed hunter running across the plain, pursued by the storm as a criminal by punishment, and whistling to his dog, poor beast! that howls in the marshes.

Unfortunate doctor, unfortunate gendarmes and unfortunate hunter!

But the door is opened suddenly, and Baby springs into the room, crying:

"Papa, dinner is ready!"

Poor doctor! Poor gendarmes!

"What have we for dinner?"

The cloth was as white as the snow in December, the service sparkled in the lamplight, the vapor of the soup was engulfed under the lamp-shade and obscured the flame as it filled the room with a savory odor of cabbage.

Ah! poor doctor! poor gendarmes!

The doors were tightly closed and the curtains carefully drawn; Baby bounded into his high chair, and stretched out his little neck for me to tie on his bib, crying:

"Oh! how I love cabbage soup!"

And, smiling within myself, I muttered:

"The rascal has all my tastes!"

Mamma, who had just come in and removed her gloves, remarked, radiantly:

"I believe there is something in this dish of which you are very fond."

A pheasant! I turned instinctively towards the buffet, upon which I knew there was a dusty bottle of my old Chambertin.

Pheasant and Chambertin! Providence created the one for the other, and my wife has never separated them.

"By all the wooden swords, my dear ones, how comfortable we are at home!" cried I, laughing heartily. "By all the wooden swords, we are!"

"By all the tin pistols!" added Baby, stretching his neck towards the soup.

And everybody laughed.

Poor gendarmes! Poor doctor!

Ah! yes, I love autumn, and my dear boy loves it too, not simply because of the pleasure of meeting the loved ones by the fireside, but also because of the wild storms themselves, the wind and the dead leaves. There is a charm in the contemplation of all this.

How often have my boy and I rambled in the gray fields, despite the cold and heavy mists!

We were well clothed, and our long boots reached to our knees; I used to take him by the hand, and we would stroll where fancy led us. He was only five years old then, but he walked like a man. My God! and that was twenty-five years ago!

We would follow the little path, well-nigh hidden beneath the damp, black leaves; the great, bare poplars trembled in the wind, and through their gray branches we could catch, here and there, a glimpse of the distant horizon tinged with a fading hue of violet, above which hung long bands of cold, dark clouds. Scattered over the plain beneath us lay clusters of little houses, with their thatched roofs and red chimneys from which escaped at intervals curls of bluish smoke that were tossed hither and thither by the wind. Baby leaped for joy, as he held on to his hat to keep it from blowing away, and turned towards me his little eyes bright with tears. His cheeks were red with cold, and from the end of his nose hung a tiny, transparent pearl, ready to fall. But he was joyful, and we strolled beside the wet meadows over which spread the swollen streamlets. No more reeds, no more water-lilies, no more flowers on the banks! A few stray cows had plunged knee-deep in the soaked grass and were slowly pasturing.

In a hollow beside the huge trunk of an old willow, sat two little girls, close together under a great cloak which covered them. They were guarding the cows, their bare feet in cracked sabots and their chilled little faces peeping out from the vast hood.

From time to time, broad pools of water, in which was reflected the leaden sky, barred our path, and we paused awhile on the edge of these little ponds shivering in the blast to watch the floating leaves. They were the last leaves of autumn. We saw them detach

themselves from the tops of the great trees, whirl in the air and fall into the pools. I took my little man in my arms, and we crossed as best we could. On the edge of a dark and empty field lay an overturned plough or a forgotten harrow. The leafless grape-vines in the vineyard were on the ground, and, not far distant, the rough and wet props had been piled in a vast heap.

I recollect that, on one of these autumnal promenades, we had arrived at the summit of the hill, and stood beside the hedges which bordered a deserted road which led across an old bridge. Suddenly, the wind blew in fury. My boy, nearly suffocated, clung to my knees and took refuge under my overcoat. My dog, planting itself firmly on its feet, its tail between its legs and its ears drooping, stared me piteously in the face.

I turned: the horizon was black and threatening. Immense dark clouds hurried towards us, and, on all sides, the trees bent beneath the torrents of rain that poured from the rumbling monsters overhead. My boy trembled and wept in fear; but to return with him in the midst of such a storm was impossible. I, therefore, took shelter behind the hedge near an old willow. Having opened my umbrella, I unbuttoned my overcoat, bent forward and provided for Baby a snug little nook into which he crept forthwith. Then, my dog placed itself in front of its playfellow, and, thus protected, Baby soon grew cheerful, laughing joyfully

as he clasped my knees. I caught a glimpse of his smiling face through the opening in my coat, and called to him:

"Well, my little man, are you comfortable?"

"Yes, my dear papa."

And I felt his tiny arms about my waist. I was not so stout then as I am now; and I perceived very clearly that he was thankful for the shelter I afforded him, for he raised his little lips to me, through the opening in my coat, and I bent forward to kiss them.

"Is it yet raining outside, papa?"

"Still a few drops, my boy; but it is well-nigh over."

"Over already!—and I was so contented in here!"

Why do all these souvenirs cling to the heart? It is foolish, perhaps, to mention these moments of happiness, but how memory loves to dwell upon them!

We returned home, wet and weary, where we received a severe scolding. But when evening came, when Baby was in bed and when I went to kiss and tickle him a little, as I was in the habit of doing, he put his little arms around my neck and whispered in my ear:

"Say, papa, when it rains again we will take another walk, won't we?"

CHAPTER X.

HE WOULD HAVE BEEN FORTY YEARS OLD.

WHEN one has witnessed the birth of his child, followed his first steps in life, seen him smile and weep, and been called papa by the darling that holds out his little arms to be taken up, one imagines that he has experienced all the paternal joys, and, as if satiated with these sweet daily pleasures, already foresees those of the morrow. One grasps at the future and empties the cup of the present with quick, huge draughts, instead of enjoying its precious contents drop by drop. But let Baby be attacked by sickness, and one is quickly brought to reason.

In order to feel the entire power of those bonds which attach us to our children, it is necessary to be in fear of seeing them severed; to appreciate the depth of a river, we must have been on the point of drowning.

Call back to your memory the morning when, after raising the covers of his little bed, you beheld Baby, with pinched and pale features, stretched helplessly upon his pillow. His hollow eyes, surrounded by rings of deep blue, were half-closed. You encountered his gaze which seemed hidden behind a veil; he saw you without a smile. His features were expressive of nothing but feebleness and fatigue; he seemed no

longer your own child. You wished him good morning, but he did not respond. A half-suppressed sigh escaped his wan lips and his heavy eyelids drooped. You caught his thin, transparent little hands in your own: they were feverish and moist, and the nails were colorless. Then you pressed a warm kiss upon his tiny fingers, but not a movement replied to your tenderness.

After a moment of silent agony, you turned and saw your wife weeping behind you.

It was at this moment that you trembled from head to foot, and that a consciousness of approaching misfortune filled your mind with a terror of which you could not rid yourself. Every instant, you returned to the bedside of your boy, hoping, perhaps, that your eyes had deceived you, or that some miracle had been performed. You raised the curtains, but let them fall again immediately, for you felt the tears mounting to your eyes; and yet you wished to smile in order to force a smile to those thin, pale lips, you sought to awake in him a desire for something, no matter what, but without success: he remained motionless and exhausted, not even turning towards you, and indifferent to all you said. He seemed a stranger even to you.

And how long a time has it required to reduce this little being to this condition? But a few hours. And how long a time might it require to close his eyes forever? Five minutes, perhaps!

You know that life in this frail body is held by a slender thread. You feel that this little being was not

made to suffer, that existence is but a breath, and you think:

"Suppose this should be his last!"

A moment ago he complained. His complaints have increased. It seems as if something surrounded him and struggled to tear him from your arms. You approach him, and press him upon your breast almost involuntarily as if to give him a little of your own life. His bed is moist with the sweat of fever; his lips grow paler. His thin, bloodless nostrils dilate and contract rapidly; his mouth is open and he gasps for breath. And yet it was this poor little mouth that laughed joyfully as it pressed itself upon your own. All those joys, those peals of childish laughter, those endless chats, and that past happiness are recalled to your mind by this tiny form that lies there struggling for breath. You are speechless and your eyes are filled with tears.

Poor man! Your hands seek his little legs, and you are afraid to touch his breast that you have so often kissed, lest your fingers encounter that horrible thinness which you know is there, the contact with which would cause you to burst into sobs.

And, then, at a certain moment, when the sunlight inundates the room, your whole being is thrilled by a deep moan that seems to be a cry for help. You run to him: his features are contracted, and he turns towards you, but his eyes can see you no longer.

All is calm again: the child is motionless, but his

hollow cheeks have grown as yellow and transparent as the amber beads about his neck.

The recollection of this moment forever haunts the heart that has loved; and even in old age, when time has veiled these sufferings, and other pains and joys have come to you, the bed of agony appears to you in all its horror, as you sit by the fireside in the evening. In the glowing coals you see the sick-room, the bed of the lost babe, the table upon which were heaped his toys, numbers of labelled bottles and all the arsenal of necessities that sickness gathers about that sufferer. His little garments, arranged in order upon the chair, have waited long, and his worn boots lie neglected in the corner. You can even see his finger prints upon the door, zig-zags that he made with his pencil upon the wall and, near the window, dates and marks of his monthly increase in height. You can see him playing, running, throwing himself into your arms, and, at the same time, you feel his cold, glassy eyes fixed upon you, as he lies there in his white winding-sheet sprinkled with holy water!

Is it not true, grandmother, that your mind is haunted, at times, by these souvenirs, and that your eyes fill with tears as you murmur: "He would have been forty years old!"

And do we not know, dear old lady, whose heart still bleeds, that, hidden in your bureau, just back of your trinkets and very near a little bundle of old, yellow letters, lies a museum of sacred relics: his last shoes,

the comrades of his play-hours, with which he scampered in the sand the day he complained of being chilled; a few remnants of broken toys; a branch of dried boxwood; a little cap—his last!—carefully enveloped in a triple covering; and a thousand trifles which for you, poor woman, are the crumbs of your broken heart?

The bonds which unite children to their parents loosen. Those which unite parents to their children break!

On the one hand, it is the past that vanishes—on the other, it is the future that is blasted!

CHAPTER XI.

CONVALESCENCE.

BUT, dear reader, forget what I have just said. Baby does not wish to quit you; he does not wish to die, poor little being! And should you desire a proof of this assertion, cast your eyes upon him for a moment and see him smile.

It is a pale smile that resembles those sunbeams which struggle through the clouds at the close of a rainy winter. You rather divine it than see it, but it suffices to warm your heart. The mist begins to rise; he sees you, hears you, and knows that his papa is near. Your child is restored to you. His glance is already clearer. Call him gently!

He wishes to turn towards you, but he cannot as yet, and his only reply is a feeble wave of the hand that drops again upon the covers.

Wait awhile, poor, impatient father! To-morrow, when he awakes, he will call you papa!

And you will feel how it heals your heart-wounds, this "papa" which resembles a sigh and which, although hardly intelligible, is nevertheless a sign of returning life. It will seem to you that your child is born a second time.

But he will suffer still, and there will be other crises;

the tempest is not calmed in an instant; but, then, he will be able to rest his head upon your shoulder, as he nestles in your arms; there will be more complaints, and his eyes and lips will ask your aid. You will be united once more, you and your darling boy, and you will feel that he suffers less by suffering on your knees.

You will keep his hand in your own, and, should you wish to leave him but for a single instant, he will look at you and hold you by the finger. And what eloquence there is in this gentle pressure! Dear Monsieur, do you recollect it?

"Papa, remain with me; I am better when you are here. When I am alone, I am afraid of illness. Fold me in your arms and I shall suffer less!"

The more necessary your protection is to another, the greater the pleasure you experience in bestowing it. But how sweet it is when he who asks this protection is your second self—a being you love more than your own life! Convalescence introduces a new infancy, as it were. New surprises, new joys and new desires are felt one by one as health returns. But that which is most touching is the delicate coaxing of the child who still suffers and clings to you; it is an abandonment, an extreme feebleness that casts him entirely upon yourself and implores your help. Never in his life has he so much enjoyed your presence; never has he so willingly taken refuge in the folds of your wrapper, and never has he listened so attentively to your stories or smiled so cunningly at your excess of gayety.

Is it true, as it seems to you, that he never was so charming before, or is it simply that the proximity of danger has made you attach more value to his caresses, and that you count your treasures with all the more pleasure for having been on the verge of ruin?

* * * * * *

But the little man is again upon his feet. Beat, drums! sound, trumpets! and you, disemboweled horses, quit your hiding-places! Fill the room with floods of your golden light, beautiful sun! Pour forth your songs of joy, sweet birds! The little king is restored to life. Long live the king!

And you, Monseigneur, come and kiss your papa!

But the strangest thing of all is that this crisis through which you have just passed has, somehow or other, grown dear to you; you speak of the subject continually, you caress it in your thoughts, and, like the companions of Æneas, you seek to increase the pleasure of the present by the recollection of the peril of the past!

"Do you remember," you ask of one another, "the day when he was so ill? Do you recall his lifeless glance, his wasted arms and his pale lips?"

"And that morning when the doctor pressed our hands as he left the room?"

Baby alone recollects nothing of all this. He has but one desire, and that is to gain strength and to have his little cheeks plump again.

"Papa, is dinner nearly ready? Tell me, papa!"

"Yes, darling; it is growing dark—wait a little."

"How long, papa?"

"Oh! about twenty minutes, little wolf."

"Twenty minutes—that is rather long! If I should eat twenty chops, would it harm me? But with potatoes, you know, and preserves—and some soup, and a piece of cake, and—have we still twenty minutes to wait? But tell me, papa, when we have beef with tomato sauce—red tomato sauce—"

"Yes, my little man; what then?"

"Why beef—a whole beef, papa, is larger than the beef we have; why don't they bring in the rest of it? I could eat all of it; but, of course, with some bread and some beans, and—and—"

The little fellow is insatiable when he has his bib about his neck, and it is a real pleasure to witness the good-will with which he uses his teeth. His bright eyes sparkle, his cheeks grow ruddier, and the capacity of his stomach is surprising. So busy is he that he hardly finds time to laugh between mouthfuls.

Towards dessert, his ardor decreases, his eyes grow more languid, his fingers relax and he becomes drowsy.

"Mamma," says he, rubbing his eyes, "please put me to bed!"

Baby is decidedly better!

CHAPTER XII.

THE FAMILY.

THE intoxication of success and the heat of the daily struggle separate the father from his family or, at least, cause him to be a stranger in his household, and he soon finds that the old attractions no longer possess their former charm.

But when misfortune overtakes him and the cold winds mock his sighs, he recoils, looks around him for some one to sustain him in his hour of weakness, and seeks to give birth in his bosom to a feeling that may replace the vanished dream. He bends over his child and presses the hand of his wife. He seems to beseech those two beings to partake of his burden. Seeing tears in the eyes of those he loves, his own suffering appears diminished. It seems that moral pains have the same effect as physical ones. The drowning man grasps at the trembling reeds, and the broken-hearted father clasps his wife and child to his bosom. He asks their assistance, protection and warmth: it is touching to see the strongest take refuge in the arms of the most feeble, and find courage in their kisses. Children recognize all this instinctively, and the deepest emotion of which their little hearts are capable is that which they experience on seeing their father weep.

Recall to your mind, dear reader, the most distant souvenir of your past—that past which seems all the more fair for being so distant.

Have you never seen your father, on his return at evening, sit down by the fireside with tears in his eyes? You dared not approach him, at first, notwithstanding the sincerity of your sympathy. How great must have been the unhappiness that caused a father's tears! It was then that you felt the entire strength of those bonds that attached you to this poor man: his misery was your misery too, and the shaft that pierced your father's breast pierced your own also.

And how well the child understands this solidarity of the family of which it is a member!

But you, surely, have experienced this. You remained silent and sobbing in your little corner and, without knowing why, stretched out your arms to your first and oldest friend.

Then he turned and understood you, and his heart could no longer contain its grief. Father, mother and child clasped one another in a loving embrace; not one word was uttered, but thousands were understood.

But did you know the cause of this poor man's suffering?

Not in the least!

And that is why poets have sung of paternal and filial affection, and called the family sacred: it is because we find in its bosom the very source of mutual love, assistance and protection—those feelings which,

from time to time, spread themselves over the entire ocean of society, but never otherwise than as a feeble echo!

It is only at long intervals in history that we see a people gather together, each man confiding in the others and trembling when his neighbor trembles.

It requires a terrible upheaval to cause a million of human beings to clasp hands and understand one another by a single glance; it requires a superhuman effort to make of a nation a single family, and cause its fireside to extend to its frontiers.

It requires but a sigh, a complaint or a tear to cause a man, a woman and a child to feel that their three hearts are one.

Scoff at marriage, if you will; it is easily ridiculed. All human contracts are faulty, and faults always seem ludicrous to others than the victims. There are husbands who have been and are being deceived; that is quite certain. But the first thing we do on seeing a man fall, no matter if he break his neck, is to laugh heartily. Hence the immense gayety that invariably greets Sganarelle!

But let us give the matter more serious attention, and we will find that, hidden beneath all this misery, all this dust of disappointed vanity, all these ridiculous errors and comical passions, lies the very pivot of society. And we must acknowledge that all this is for the best, since family love and protection are not only the basis of the world, but also its greatest sources of consolation and joy.

Honor and respect for the flag, patriotism, and, in fact, anything that induces a man to devote his energies to the cause of something or somebody that is not himself have their birth directly or indirectly in the bosom of the family; and we may say with truth that this bosom is the source of those great rivers in which is quenched the thirst of the human heart.

The selfishness of three beings! you cry. But what matter, if this selfishness engender devotion!

Do you reproach the butterfly for having been a caterpillar?

Do not accuse me of indulging in poetic exaggeration!

The life of a family is very often calm and prosaic; the saucepan that figures in its coat of arms is by no means an unmeaning emblem, I acknowledge. Should a husband come to me, saying: "Monsieur, on two consecutive days I have fallen asleep by the fireside," I should reply: "You are too indolent, but I understand you."

I understand also that Baby's trumpet is deafening, that his playthings are terribly expensive, that lace flounces and zibelline trimmings are more so, that balls are tedious and that Madame is occasionally ill-humored, silly and exacting; in a word, I understand that a man upon whom fortune smiles considers his wife and child as impediments in his path!

But I shall certainly see this happy man, when his brow is wrinkled, when deception falls upon his head

like a leaden cap, grasping those impediments he has almost cursed, at times, placing them under his arms and using them as crutches.

I do not believe in the happiness of old bachelors, or in that of those individuals who, either through folly or calculation, have avoided the most praiseworthy of all our social institutions. Much has been said upon both sides, and I do not wish to augment the volume of documents in the hands of the advocates; but acknowledge frankly, you who have heard the cry of your new-born babe and have felt your heart echo this cry, acknowledge, I say, that you are, at least, not an idiot and that you have murmured to yourself: "I am in the right, the beautiful and the good path. Here and here only is the rôle worthy of a man. I enter the ordinary, beaten, but direct road; I shall cross monotonous heaths, but every step will bring me nearer to the village belfry. I do not wander aimlessly in life; I walk forward and my feet press in my father's footprints. Upon the same journey, in after years, my child will find the traces of my steps and, seeing that I have not failed, perhaps he will say: 'I shall do as my father did, and not lose myself on the pathless waste!'"

If the word "sacred" has still a meaning, in spite of all the offices it has been made to perform, I cannot conceive of a better position for it than beside the word "family!"

We speak of progress, of justice, of the general

well-being, of politics and of patriotic devotion—very proper subjects of conversation, I acknowledge, but the entire golden horizon is covered by those three words: "Love thy neighbor," and, in my opinion, at least, it is precisely this that is most neglected.

To love one's neighbor is as simple as "good-morning"; but to discover one who entertains this most natural feeling requires a lantern with a more powerful reflector than that reputed to have been used by Diogenes. There are people who exhibit to you the seed of this affection in the palms of their hands, but seedsmen are the very last persons to show you the plant in full bloom.

Well, dear reader, this little plant, which ought to thrive in France like the corn-rose amid the grain, this little plant, which we never see higher than the water-cresses of the spring, but which ought to grow taller than the oaks, this little plant so difficult to find is — I will tell you where:

It is at the family fireside, between the shovel and tongs and beside the pot of boiling soup. It is there that it is perpetuated, and it is to the family that we owe its present existence. I love nearly all the philanthropists and protectors of humanity; but I have faith in none but those who have learned to love others by kissing their own children.

We cannot remodel man to suit humanitarian theories; he is selfish and loves above all things that which pertains to himself. This is the human and

natural feeling, and we should encourage, extend and cultivate it. In one word, in the love of family is included the love of father-land and, as a consequence, the love of humanity. It is the fathers who make good citizens.

Man has not thirty-six motors; he has but one in his heart. Do not discuss it, but profit by it.

Affection is gained step by step. The love of three beings, when it is vigorous, soon desires more room: the walls of the house are extended, and, little by little, the neighbors are invited in. That which is of most importance is, therefore, to engender this love of three beings, for I am afraid that it is folly to impose at the outset upon the heart of man the entire human race. It cannot swallow such an immense piece of food at a gulp and without previous preparation!

And this is why I have always thought that the numerous sous given for the redemption of the little Chinese might have made the fire crackle on many of the cold hearths at home, caused many eyes to beam with joy about a pot of steaming soup, warmed many chilled mothers, made many hungry babies smile and restored to many poor and discouraged unfortunates happiness and content on returning home at evening.

How many good, hearty kisses you might have caused to resound with all those sous!—and, in consequence, how much nourishment might you have given to that little plant of which we have spoken!

"But, then, what would have beeome of the little Chinese?"

Well, we will postpone the consideration of that question for the present; we must learn to love our own children before we can love those of others.

This is brutal and selfish, but you will not change it in the least; it is with little faults that we construct great virtues. And, finally, beware of lamenting, for this selfishness is the first stone of that great monument — surrounded by scaffolding for the moment — which we call Society!

THE END.

CATALOGUE OF BOOKS

PUBLISHED BY

T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

And for sale by all Booksellers.

☞ **Any of the books named in this Catalogue, will be sent by mail, to any one, to any place, at once, post-paid, on remitting the price of the ones wanted to T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.**

T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS' NEW BOOKS.

ÉMILE ZOLA'S NEW REALISTIC WORKS.

Nana! Sequel to L'Assommoir. *By Emile Zola.* Nana! Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.00 in morocco cloth, black and gold. Nana!

Nana's Mother; or, L'Assommoir. *By Emile Zola.* The Greatest Novel ever printed. Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.00 in cloth.

Thérèse Raquin. *By Emile Zola,* author of "Nana," "L'Assommoir," etc. Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.00 in cloth, black and gold.

La Curée. *By Emile Zola,* author of "Nana," and "L'Assommoir." Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.00 in cloth, black and gold.

Magdalen Férat. *By Emile Zola,* author of "Nana," and "L'Assommoir." Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in cloth, black and gold.

Clorinda; or, The Court of Napoleon III., during his Reign. *By Emile Zola.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in cloth, black and gold.

Albine; or, The Abbé's Temptation. (*La Faute De L'Abbe Mouret.*) *By Emile Zola.* Price 75 cents in paper, or $1.25 in cloth, black and gold.

Hélène, a Love Episode; *or, Une Page D'Amour. By Emile Zola.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in morocco cloth, black and gold.

The Rougon-Macquart Family; or, Miette. (*La Fortune Des Rougon.*) *By Emile Zola.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in cloth.

The Markets of Paris; or, *Le Ventre de Paris. By Emile Zola.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in morocco cloth, black and gold.

The Conquest of Plassans; *or, La Conquete de Plassans. By Emile Zola.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in cloth, black and gold.

SEQUEL TO "NANA." NANA'S DAUGHTER.

Nana's Daughter. A Continuation of and Sequel to Emile Zola's Great Realistic Novel of "Nana." Price 75 cents in paper, or $1.00 in cloth.

HENRY GRÉVILLE'S PATHETIC NOVELS.

Xenie's Inheritance. A Tale of Russian Life. By Henry Gréville.

Savéli's Expiation. A Powerful Novel. By Henry Gréville.

Dournof. A Russian Story. By Henry Gréville, author of "Dosia."

Lucie Rodey. A Charming Society Novel. By Henry Gréville.

Bonne-Marie. A Tale of Normandy and Paris. By Henry Gréville.

A Friend; or, "L'Ami." By Henry Gréville, author of "Dosia."

Sonia. A Love Story. By Henry Gréville, author of "Dosia."

Gabrielle; or, The House of Maurèze. By Henry Gréville.

Above are in paper cover, price 50 cents each, or in cloth, at $1.00 each.

Dosia. *A Russian Story. By Henry Gréville,* author of "Markof."

The Trials of Raïssa. *By Henry Gréville,* author of "Dosia."

The Princess Ogherof. *A Love Story. By Henry Gréville.*

Philomène's Marriages. A Love Story. *By Henry Gréville.*

Pretty Little Countess Zina. *By Henry Gréville,* author of "Dosia."

Marrying Off a Daughter. *A Love Story. By Henry Gréville.*

Above are in paper cover, price 75 cents each, or in cloth, at $1.25 each.

Markof, the Russian Violinist. A Russian Story. By Henry Gréville. One large volume, 12mo., cloth, price $1.50, or paper cover, 75 cents.

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.** (A)

T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS' NEW BOOKS.

PETERSONS' SQUARE 12mo. SERIES.

The following books are all printed on tinted paper, and are each issued in uniform style, in square 12mo. form. Price Fifty Cents each in Paper Cover, or $1.00 each in Morocco Cloth, Black and Gold.

The History of a Parisienne. Octave Feuillet's new and greatest work.
Rancy Cottem's Courtship. By author of "Major Jones's Courtship."
Fanchon, the Cricket; or, La Petite Fadette. By George Sand.
Father Tom and the Pope; or, A Night at the Vatican. Illustrated.
The Story of Elizabeth. By Miss Thackeray, daughter of W. M. Thackeray.
A Woman's Mistake; or, Jacques de Trévannes. A Charming Love Story.
Bessie's Six Lovers. A Charming Love Story. By Henry Peterson.
Two Ways to Matrimony; or, Is it Love? or, False Pride.
The Matchmaker. By Beatrice Reynolds. A Charming Love Story.
The Days of Madame Pompadour. By Gabrielle De St. Andre.
Madeleine. A Charming Love Story. Jules Sandeau's Prize Novel.
Carmen. By Prosper Merimee. *Book the Opera was dramatized from.*
The Amours of Philippe; or, Philippe's Love Affairs, by Octave Feuillet.
Sybil Brotherton. A Novel. By Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth.
The Red Hill Tragedy. By Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth.
The American L'Assommoir. A parody on Zola's "L'Assommoir."
Hyde Park Sketches. A very humorous and entertaining work.
The Little Countess. By Octave Feuillet, author of "Count De Camors."
Miss Margery's Roses. A Charming Love Story. By Robert C. Meyers.
Madame Pompadour's Garter. A Romance of the Reign of Louis XV.
That Girl of Mine. By the author of "That Lover of Mine."
That Lover of Mine. By the author of "That Girl of Mine."

Above are in paper cover, price 50 cents each, or $1.00 each in cloth.

NEW BOOKS—MAJOR JONES'S COURTSHIP, ETC.

The Exiles. The Russian 'Robinson Crusoe.' Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Mildred's Cadet; or, Hearts and Bell-Buttons. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Major Jones's Courtship. 21 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Major Jones's Georgia Scenes. 12 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Major Jones's Travels. 8 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Bellah. A Love Story. By Octave Feuillet. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Sabine's Falsehood. A Love Story. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Vidocq! The French Detective. Illustrated. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
Camille; or, The Fate of a Coquette. Paper. 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.
My Hero. A Love Story. By Mrs. Forrester. Paper, 75 cts., cloth, $1.00.
Linda; or, The Young Pilot of the Belle Creole. Paper, 75 cts., cloth, $1.25.
Madame Bovary. By Gustave Flaubert. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
The Count de Camors. *By Octave Feuillet.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.
How She Won Him! A Love Story. Paper cover, 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.
Angèle's Fortune. By André Theuriet. Paper cover, 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.
St. Maur; or, An Earl's Wooing. Paper cover, 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.
The Woman in Black. Illustrated Cover. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
The Earl of Mayfield. An Historical Novel. *By Thomas P. May.* The Eighth and Cheap Edition for the Million. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.** (B)

T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS' NEW BOOKS.

ADOLPHE BELOT'S INGENIOUS NOVELS.

The Black Venus. *By Adolphe Belot.* Paper cover, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
La Grande Florine. *By Adolphe Belot.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.
The Stranglers of Paris. *By Adolphe Belot.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.

MRS. BURNETT'S CHARMING STORIES.

Kathleen. A Love Story. By Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett.
Theo. A Love Story. By author of "Kathleen," "Miss Crespigny," etc.
Pretty Polly Pemberton. By author of "Kathleen," "Theo," etc.
A Quiet Life. By Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, author of "Theo."
Miss Crespigny. A Charming Love Story. By author of "Kathleen."
Above are in paper cover, price 50 cents each, or in cloth, at $1.00 each.

Jarl's Daughter and Other Tales. By Mrs. Burnett. Price 25 cents.
Lindsay's Luck. By Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett. Price 25 cents.

NEW AND GOOD WORKS BY BEST AUTHORS.

A Heart Twice Won; or, Second Love. *A Love Story. By Mrs. Elizabeth Van Loon.* Morocco cloth, black and gold. Price $1.50.
The Mystery of Allanwold. *A Thrilling Novel. By Mrs. Elizabeth Van Loon,* author of "A Heart Twice Won." Cloth, and gold. Price $1.50.
Under the Willows; or, The Three Countesses. *By Mrs. Elizabeth Van Loon,* author of "A Heart Twice Won." Cloth, and gold. Price $1.50.
The Shadow of Hampton Mead. *A Charming Story. By Mrs. Elizabeth Van Loon,* author of "A Heart Twice Won." Cloth. Price $1.50.
The Last Athenian. By Victor Rydberg. Translated from the Swedish. Large 12mo. volume, near 600 pages, cloth, black and gold, price $1.75.
The Roman Traitor; or, The Days of Cicero, Cato, and Cataline. A Tale of the Republic. *By Henry William Herbert.* Morocco cloth, price $1.75.
The Earl of Mayfield. *By Thomas P. May,* of Louisiana. One large duodecimo volume, bound in morocco cloth, black and gold, price $1.50.
Myrtle Lawn. An American Romance in Real Life. *By Robert E. Ballard,* of North Carolina. Morocco cloth, black and gold, price $1.50.
Miss Leslie's Cook Book, a complete Manual to Domestic Cookery in all its Branches. Paper cover, $1.00, or bound in morocco cloth, $1.50.
Frank Forester's Sporting Scenes and Characters. By Henry William Herbert. With Nineteen Illustrations. Two volumes, cloth, $4 00.
Francatelli's Modern Cook Book. With the most approved methods of French, English, German, and Italian Cookery. With Sixty-two Illustrations. One volume, 600 pages, bound in morocco cloth, $5.00.
The Waverley Novels. *New National Edition.* Five 8vo. vols., cloth 15.00
Charles Dickens' Works. *New National Edition.* 7 volumes, cloth, 20.00
Charles Dickens' Works. *Illustrated 8vo. Edition.* 18 vols., cloth. 27.00
Charles Dickens' Works. *New American Edition.* 22 vols., cloth. 33.00
Charles Dickens' Works. *Green Cloth 12mo. Edition.* 32 vols., cloth, 44.00
Charles Dickens' Works. *Illustrated 12mo. Edition.* 36 vols., cloth, 45.00

Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price. by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa. (C)

T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS' PUBLICATIONS.

☞ **Orders solicited from Booksellers, Librarians, Canvassers, News Agents, and all others in want of good and fast-selling books, which will be supplied at very Low Prices.** ☜

MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH'S FAMOUS WORKS.

Complete in forty-three large duodecimo volumes, bound in morocco cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 each; or $75.25 a set, each set is put up in a neat box.

Ishmael; or, In the Depths, being Self-Made; or, Out of Depths.... $1 75
Self Raised; or, From the Depths. Sequel to "Ishmael."..... 1 75

The Mother-in-Law,.....	$1 75	The Deserted Wife,.....	1 75
The Fatal Secret,.....	1 75	The Fortune Seeker,.....	1 75
How He Won Her,.....	1 75	The Bridal Eve,.....	1 75
Fair Play,.....	1 75	The Lost Heiress,.....	1 75
The Spectre Lover,.....	1 75	The Two Sisters,.....	1 75
Victor's Triumph,.....	1 75	Lady of the Isle,.....	1 75
A Beautiful Fiend,.....	1 75	Prince of Darkness,.....	1 75
The Artist's Love,.....	1 75	The Three Beauties,.....	1 75
A Noble Lord,.....	1 75	Vivia; or the Secret of Power,	1 75
Lost Heir of Linlithgow,.....	1 75	Love's Labor Won,.....	1 75
Tried for her Life,.....	1 75	The Gipsy's Prophecy,.....	1 75
Cruel as the Grave,.....	1 75	Retribution.....	1 75
The Maiden Widow,.....	1 75	The Christmas Guest,.....	1 75
The Family Doom,.....	1 75	Haunted Homestead,.....	1 75
The Bride's Fate,.....	1 75	Wife's Victory,.....	1 75
The Changed Brides,.....	1 75	Allworth Abbey, ...	1 75
Fallen Pride, ...	1 75	India; Pearl of Pearl River,..	1 75
The Widow's Son,.....	1 75	Curse of Clifton,.....	1 75
The Bride of Llewellyn,.....	1 75	Discarded Daughter,.....	1 75
The Fatal Marriage,.....	1 75	The Mystery of Dark Hollow,..	1 75

The Missing Bride; or, Miriam, the Avenger,..... 1 75
The Phantom Wedding; or, The Fall of the House of Flint,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

Self-Made; or, Out of the Depths. By Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth. Complete in two volumes, cloth, price $1.75 each, or $3.50 a set.

MRS. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ'S WORKS.

Complete in twelve large duodecimo volumes, bound in morocco cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 each; or $21.00 a set, each set is put up in a neat box.

Ernest Linwood,.....	$1 75	Love after Marriage,.....	$1 75
The Planter's Northern Bride,..	1 75	Eoline; or Magnolia Vale,.....	1 75
Courtship and Marriage,.....	1 75	The Lost Daughter,.....	1 75
Rena; or, the Snow Bird,.....	1 75	The Banished Son,.....	1 75
Marcus Warland,.....	1 75	Helen and Arthur,.....	1 75

Linda; or, the Young Pilot of the Belle Creole,..... 1 75
Robert Graham; the Sequel to "Linda; or Pilot of Belle Creole,"... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.** ☜ **(1)**

MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS' WORKS.

Complete in twenty-three large duodecimo volumes, bound in morocco cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 each; or $40.25 a set, each set is put up in a neat box.

Norston's Rest,	$1 75	The Soldiers' Orphans,	$1 75
Bertha's Engagement,	1 75	A Noble Woman,	1 75
Bellehood and Bondage,	1 75	Silent Struggles,	1 75
The Old Countess,	1 75	The Rejected Wife,	1 75
Lord Hope's Choice,	1 75	The Wife's Secret,	1 75
The Reigning Belle,	1 75	Mary Derwent,	1 75
Palaces and Prisons,	1 75	Fashion and Famine,	1 75
Married in Haste,	1 75	The Curse of Gold,	1 75
Wives and Widows,	1 75	Mabel's Mistake,	1 75
Ruby Gray's Strategy,	1 75	The Old Homestead,	1 75
Doubly False,	1 75	The Heiress,	1 75
		The Gold Brick,	1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

MISS ELIZA A. DUPUY'S WORKS.

Complete in fourteen large duodecimo volumes, bound in morocco cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 each; or $24.50 a set, each set is put up in a neat box.

A New Way to Win a Fortune	$1 75	Why Did He Marry Her?	$1 75
The Discarded Wife,	1 75	Who Shall be Victor?	1 75
The Clandestine Marriage,	1 75	The Mysterious Guest,	1 75
The Hidden Sin	1 75	Was He Guilty?	1 75
The Dethroned Heiress,	1 75	The Cancelled Will,	1 75
The Gipsy's Warning,	1 75	The Planter's Daughter,	1 75
All For Love,	1 75	Michael Rudolph,	1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

LIST OF THE BEST COOK BOOKS PUBLISHED.

Every housekeeper should possess at least one of the following Cook Books, as they would save the price of it in a week's cooking.

Miss Leslie's Cook Book, a Complete Manual to Domestic Cookery in all its Branches. Paper cover, $1.00, or bound in cloth,		$1 50
The Queen of the Kitchen; or, The Southern Cook Book. Containing 1007 Old Southern Family Receipts for Cooking,	Cloth,	1 75
Mrs. Hale's New Cook Book,	Cloth,	1 75
Petersons' New Cook Book,	Cloth,	1 75
Widdifield's New Cook Book,	Cloth,	1 75
Mrs. Goodfellow's Cookery as it Should Be,	Cloth,	1 75
The National Cook Book. By a Practical Housewife,	Cloth,	1 75
The Young Wife's Cook Book,	Cloth,	1 75
Miss Leslie's New Receipts for Cooking,	Cloth,	1 75
Mrs. Hale's Receipts for the Million,	Cloth,	1 75
The Family Save-All. By author of "National Cook Book,"	Cloth,	1 75
Francatelli's Modern Cook Book. With the most approved methods of French, English, German, and Italian Cookery. With Sixty-two Illustrations. One vol., 600 pages, bound in morocco cloth,		5 00

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

MRS. C. A. WARFIELD'S WORKS.

Complete in nine large duodecimo volumes, bound in morocco cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $15.75 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

The Cardinal's Daughter,.. .....$1 75
Ferne Fleming,..... 1 75
The Household of Bouverie,.... 1 75
A Double Wedding,..... 1 75
Lady Ernestine; or, The Absent Lord of Rocheforte,..... 1 75
Miriam's Memoirs,.. .....$1 75
Monfort Hall,..... 1 75
Sea and Shore,..... 1 75
Hester Howard's Temptation,... 1 75

FREDRIKA BREMER'S DOMESTIC NOVELS.

Complete in six large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $10.50 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

Father and Daughter,.....$1 75
The Four Sisters,..... 1 75
The Neighbors,.....$1 75
The Home,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

Life in the Old World. In two volumes, cloth, price, ... 3 50

Q. K. PHILANDER DOESTICKS' WORKS.

Complete in four large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $7.00 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

Doesticks' Letters,.....$1 75
Plu-Ri-Bus-Tah, ... 1 75
The Elephant Club,.....$1 75
Witches of New York,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

JAMES A. MAITLAND'S WORKS.

Complete in seven large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $12.25 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

The Watchman,.....$1 75
The Wanderer,..... 1 75
The Lawyer's Story,..... 1 75
Diary of an Old Doctor,.....$1 75
Sartaroe,..... 1 75
The Three Cousins,..... 1 75
The Old Patroon; or the Great Van Broek Property,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE'S NOVELS.

Complete in seven large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $12.25 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

The Sealed Packet,.....$1 75
Garstang Grange,..... 1 75
Leonora Casaloni,... 1 75
Dream Numbers,.....$1 75
Beppo, the Conscript,..... 1 75
Gemma,..... 1 75
Marietta,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

FRANK FORESTER'S SPORTING SCENES.

Frank Forester's Sporting Scenes and Characters. By Henry William Herbert. A New, Revised, and Enlarged Edition, with a Life of the Author, a New Introductory Chapter, Frank Forester's Portrait and Autograph, with a full length picture of him in his shooting costume, and seventeen other illustrations, from original designs by Darley and Frank Forester. Two vols., morocco cloth, bevelled boards, $4.00.

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

WILKIE COLLINS' BEST WORKS.

Basil; or, The Crossed Path..$1 50 | The Dead Secret. 12mo.....$1 50

Above are each in one large duodecimo volume, bound in cloth.

The Dead Secret, 8vo..... 75 | The Queen's Revenge,..... 75
Basil; or, the Crossed Path,..... 75 | Miss or Mrs?..... 50
Hide and Seek,..... 75 | Mad Monkton,..... 50
After Dark,..... 75 | Sights a-Foot,..... 50
The Stolen Mask,..... 25 | The Yellow Mask,... 25 | Sister Rose,... 25

The above books are each issued in paper cover, in octavo form.

EMERSON BENNETT'S INDIAN STORIES.

Complete in seven large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $12.25 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

The Border Rover,.....$1 75 | Bride of the Wilderness,.....$1 75
Clara Moreland,..... ..... 1 75 | Ellen Norbury,..... 1 75
The Orphan's Trials,..... 1 75 | Kate Clarendon,..... 1 75
Viola; or Adventures in the Far South-West,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

The Heiress of Bellefonte,..... 75 | The Pioneer's Daughter,..... 75

GREEN'S WORKS ON GAMBLING.

Complete in four large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.75 *each; or* $7.00 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

Gambling Exposed,.....$1 75 | The Reformed Gambler,.....$1 75
The Gambler's Life,..... 1 75 | Secret Band of Brothers,..... 1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

DOW'S PATENT SERMONS.

Complete in four large duodecimo volumes, bound in cloth, gilt back, price $1.50 *each; or* $6.00 *a set, each set is put up in a neat box.*

Dow's Patent Sermons, 1st Series, cloth,.....$1 50 | Dow's Patent Sermons, 3d Series, cloth, ...$1 50
Dow's Patent Sermons, 2d Series, cloth,..... 1 50 | Dow's Patent Sermons, 4th Series, cloth,..... ..... 1 50

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.00 each.

GEORGE SAND'S GREATEST WORKS.

Consuelo, 12mo., cloth,.....$1 50 | Jealousy, 12mo., cloth,.....$1 50
Countess of Rudolstadt,..... 1 50 | Indiana, 12mo., cloth,..... 1 50

Above are each published in 12mo., cloth, gilt side and back.

Fanchon, the Cricket, paper cover, 50 cents, or fine edition, in cloth, 1 50
First and True Love. With 11 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents; cloth, 1 00
Consuelo. Paper cover,..... 75 | The Corsair,..... 50
Simon. A Love Story,..... 50 | The Last Aldini,..... 50
The Countess of Rudolstadt. The Sequel to Consuelo. Paper cover, 75

MISS BRADDON'S WORKS.

Aurora Floyd,..... 75 | The Lawyer's Secret,..... 25
Aurora Floyd, cloth..... 1 00 | For Better, For Worse,..... 75

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on Receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

PETERSONS' "DOLLAR SERIES."

Petersons' "Dollar Series" of Good Novels are the cheapest books at One Dollar each ever published. They are all issued in uniform style, in 12mo. form, and are bound in red, blue and tan vellum, with gold and black sides and back, and are sold at the low price of One Dollar each, while they are as large as any books published at $1.75 and $2.00 each. The following have already been issued in this series:

A Woman's Thoughts About Women. By Miss Mulock.
Two Ways to Matrimony; or, Is It Love, or, False Pride?
The Story of "Elizabeth." By Miss Thackeray.
Flirtations in Fashionable Life. By Catharine Sinclair.
The Matchmaker. A Society Novel. By Beatrice Reynolds.
Rose Douglas, the Bonnie Scotch Lass. A Companion to "Family Pride."
The Earl's Secret. A Charming Love Story. By Miss Pardoe.
Family Secrets. A Companion to "Family Pride," and very fascinating.
The Macdermots of Ballycloran. An Exciting Novel, by A. Trollope.
The Family Save-All. With Economical Receipts for the Household.
Self-Sacrifice. A Charming Work. By author of "Margaret Maitland."
The Pride of Life. A Love Story. By Lady Jane Scott.
The Rival Belles; or, Life in Washington. Author "Wild Western Scenes."
The Clyffards of Clyffe. By James Payn, author "Lost Sir Massingberd."
The Orphan's Trials; or, Alone in a Great City. By Emerson Bennett.
The Heiress of Sweetwater. A Love Story, abounding with exciting scenes.
The Refugee. A delightful book, full of food for laughter, and information.
Lost Sir Massingberd. A Love Story. By author of "Clyffards of Clyffe."
Cora Belmont; or, The Sincere Lover. A True Story of the Heart.
The Lover's Trials; or, The Days Before the Revolution. By Mrs. Denison.
My Son's Wife. A strong, bright, interesting and charming Novel.
Aunt Patty's Scrap Bag. By Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, author of "Rena."
Saratoga! and the Famous Springs. An Indian Tale of Frontier Life.
Country Quarters. A Charming Love Story. By Countess of Blessington.
Self-Love. A Book for Young Ladies, with prospects in Life contrasted.
The Devoted Bride; or, Faith and Fidelity. A Love Story.
The Heiress in the Family. By author of "Marrying for Money."
Colley Cibber's Life of Edwin Forrest, with Reminiscences of the Actor.
The Man of the World. Full of style, elegance of diction, force of thought.
Out of the Depths. The Story of a Woman's Life, and a Woman's Book.
The Queen's Favorite; or, The Price of a Crown. A Romance of Don Juan.
Six Nights with the Washingtonians. By T. S. Arthur. Illustrated.
The Rector's Wife; or, The Valley of a Hundred Fires. A Beautiful work.
The Coquette; or, the Life and Letters of the beautiful Eliza Wharton.
Woman's Wrong. A Book for Women. By Mrs. Eiloart.
Harem Life in Egypt and Constantinople. By Emmeline Lott.
The Old Patroon; or, The Great Van Broek Property, by J. A. Maitland.
Nana. By Emile Zola.
L'Assommoir. By Emile Zola.
Dream Numbers. By Trollope.
Love and Duty. By Mrs. Hubback.
A Lonely Life.
The Beautiful Widow.
Gambling Exposed. By J. H. Green
Woodburn Grange. By W. Howitt.
The Cavalier. By G. P. R. James
One for Another. By H. Morford
Shoulder-Straps. By H. Morford.
Treason at Home. Panola.

Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.

PETERSONS' "STERLING SERIES."

"Petersons' Sterling Series" of New and Good Books are the Cheapest Novels in the world. They are all issued in uniform style, in octavo form, price One Dollar each, bound in morocco cloth, black and gold; or 75 cents each in paper cover, with the edges cut open all around. The following celebrated works have already been issued in this series:

Corinne; or, Italy. By Madame De Stael. This is a Wonderful Book.
The Man in Black; or the Days of Queen Anne. By G. P. R. James.
Edina; or, Missing Since Midnight. A Love Story. By Mrs. Henry Wood.
Cyrilla. A Love Story. By the author of "The Initials."
Popping the Question; or, Belle of the Ball. By author of "The Jilt."
Marrying for Money. A Charming Love Story in Real Life.
Aurora Floyd. An Absorbing Love Story. By Miss M. E. Braddon.
Salathiel; or, The Wandering Jew. By Rev. George Croly.
Harry Lorrequer. Full of Fun, Frolic and Adventure. By Charles Lever.
Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon. Charles Lever's Greatest Novel.
The Flirt. A Fashionable Novel. By author of "The Gambler's Wife."
The Dead Secret. Wilkie Collins' Greatest Work.
Thackeray's Irish Sketch Book, with Thirty-eight Illustrations.
The Wife's Trials. Dramatic and Powerful. By Miss Julia Pardoe.
The Man With Five Wives. By Alexander Dumas, author of "Camille."
Pickwick Abroad. Illustrated by Cruikshank. By G. W. M. Reynolds.
First and True Love. Beautifully rich in style. By George Sand.
The Mystery; or, Anne Hereford. A Love Story. By Mrs. Henry Wood.
The Steward. Illustrated. By the author of "Valentine Vox."
Basil: or, The Crossed Path. By Wilkie Collins. Told with great power.
The Jealous Wife. Great originality of plot. By Miss Julia Pardoe.
Sylvester Sound. By the author of "Valentine Vox, the Ventriloquist."
Whitefriars; or, The Days of Charles the Second. Equal to "Ivanhoe."
Webster and Hayne's Speeches on Foot's Resolution & Slavery Compromise.
The Rival Beauties. A Beautiful Love Story. By Miss Pardoe.
The Confessions of a Pretty Woman. By Miss Julia Pardoe.
Flirtations in America; or, High Life in New York.
The Coquette. A Powerful and Amusing Tale of Love and Pride.
The Latimer Family. T. S. Arthur's Great Temperance Story, illustrated.

Above books are $1.00 each in cloth, or 75 cents each in paper cover.

The Creole Beauty. By Mrs. Sarah A. Dorsey. Price Fifty cents.
Agnes Graham. By Mrs. Sarah A. Dorsey. Price Fifty cents.

HENRY MORFORD'S AMERICAN NOVELS.

Shoulder-Straps,.....$1 75
The Coward,..... 1 75
The Days of Shoddy. A History of the late War,.....$1 75

Above are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, price $1.50 each.

THE SHAKSPEARE NOVELS.

Shakspeare and his Friends,...$1 00
The Youth of Shakspeare,..... 1 00
The Secret Passion,.....$1 00

Above three Books are also bound in morocco cloth. Price $1.25 each.

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

CHARLES DICKENS' WORKS. ILLUSTRATED.

This edition is printed from large type, octavo size, each book being complete in one large octavo volume, bound in Morocco Cloth, with Gilt Character Figures on back, and Medallion on side, price $1.50 each, or $27.00 a set, contained in eighteen volumes, the whole containing near Six Hundred Illustrations, by Cruikshank, Phiz, Browne, Maclise, and other artists.

The Pickwick Papers. By Charles Dickens. With 32 Illustrations,.$1.50
Nicholas Nickleby. By Charles Dickens. With 37 Illustrations,.... 1 50
David Copperfield. By Charles Dickens. With 8 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Oliver Twist. By Charles Dickens. With 24 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Bleak House. By Charles Dickens. With 38 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Dombey and Son. By Charles Dickens. With 38 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Sketches by "Boz." By Charles Dickens. With 20 Illustrations,... 1 50
Little Dorrit. By Charles Dickens. With 38 Illustrations..... 1 50
Our Mutual Friend. By Charles Dickens. With 42 Illustrations ... 1 50
Great Expectations. By Charles Dickens. With 34 Illustrations,... 1 50
Lamplighter's Story. By Charles Dickens. With 7 Illustrations,... 1 50
Barnaby Rudge. By Charles Dickens. With 50 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Martin Chuzzlewit. By Charles Dickens. With 8 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Old Curiosity Shop. By Charles Dickens. With 101 Illustrations,. 1 50
Christmas Stories. By Charles Dickens. With 12 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Dickens' New Stories. By Charles Dickens. With portrait of author, 1 50
A Tale of Two Cities. By Charles Dickens. With 64 Illustrations,. 1 50
Charles Dickens's American Notes and Pic-Nic Papers,..... 1 50

WORKS BY THE VERY BEST AUTHORS.

The following books are each issued in one large duodecimo volume, bound in cloth, at $1.75 each, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

The Initials. A Love Story. By Baroness Tautphœus,.....$1 75
Married Beneath Him. By author of "Lost Sir Massingberd,"..... 1 75
Margaret Maitland. By Mrs. Oliphant, author of "Zaidee,"..... 1 75
Family Pride. By author of "Pique," "Family Secrets," etc..... 1 75
The Autobiography of Edward Wortley Montagu, ... 1 75
The Forsaken Daughter. A Companion to "Linda," 1 75
Love and Liberty. A Revolutionary Story. By Alexander Dumas, 1 75
The Morrisons. By Mrs. Margaret Hosmer,..... 1 75
The Rich Husband. By author of "George Geith,"..... 1 75
The Lost Beauty. By a Noted Lady of the Spanish Court,..... 1 75
My Hero. By Mrs. Forrester. A Charming Love Story,..... 1 75
The Quaker Soldier. A Revolutionary Romance. By Judge Jones,.... 1 75
Memoirs of Vidocq, the French Detective. His Life and Adventures, 1 75
The Belle of Washington. With her Portrait. By Mrs. N. P. Lasselle, 1 75
High Life in Washington. A Life Picture. By Mrs. N. P. Lasselle, 1 75
Courtship and Matrimony. By Robert Morris. With a Portrait,... 1 50
The Jealous Husband. By Annette Marie Maillard,..... 1 75
The Conscript; or, the Days of Napoleon 1st. By Alex. Dumas,.... 1 75
Cousin Harry. By Mrs. Grey, author of "The Gambler's Wife," etc. 1 75

Above books are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

☞ Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.

WORKS BY THE VERY BEST AUTHORS.

The following books are each issued in one large duodecimo volume, bound in cloth, at $1.75 each, or each one is in paper cover at $1.50 each.

The Count of Monte-Cristo. By Dumas. Illustrated, paper $1.00,..$1 75
The Countess of Monte-Cristo. Paper cover, price $1.00; or cloth,.. 1 75
Camille; or, the Fate of a Coquette. By Alexander Dumas,..... 1 75
Love and Money. By J. B. Jones, author of the "Rival Belles,"... 1 75
The Brother's Secret; or, the Count De Mara. By William Godwin, 1 75
The Lost Love. By Mrs. Oliphant, author of "Margaret Maitland," 1 75
The Roman Traitor. By Henry William Herbert. A Roman Story, 1 75
The Last Athenian. By Victor Rydberg. From the Swedish,..... 1 75
The Bohemians of London. By Edward M. Whitty,..... 1 75
Wild Sports and Adventures in Africa. By Major W. C. Harris, 1 75
The Life, Writings, and Lectures of the late "Fanny Fern,"..... 1 75
The Life and Lectures of Lola Montez, with her portrait,..... 1 75
Wild Southern Scenes. By author of "Wild Western Scenes,"..... 1 75
Currer Lyle; or, the Autobiography of an Actress. By Louise Reeder. 1 75
The Cabin and Parlor. By J. Thornton Randolph. Illustrated,..... 1 75
The Little Beauty. A Love Story. By Mrs. Grey,..... 1 75
Lizzie Glenn; or, the Trials of a Seamstress. By T. S. Arthur,..... 1 75
Lady Maud; or, the Wonder of Kingswood Chase. By Pierce Egan, 1 75
Wilfred Montressor; or, High Life in New York. Illustrated,..... 1 75
Lorrimer Littlegood, by author "Harry Coverdale's Courtship,"..... 1 75
Married at Last. A Love Story. By Annie Thomas,..... 1 75
Shoulder Straps. By Henry Morford, author of "Days of Shoddy," 1 75
Days of Shoddy. By Henry Morford, author of "Shoulder Straps," 1 75
The Coward. By Henry Morford, author of "Shoulder Straps,"..... 1 75

Above books are each in cloth, or each one is in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

MRS. HENRY WOOD'S BEST BOOKS, IN CLOTH.

The following are cloth editions of Mrs. Henry Wood's best books, and they are each issued in large octavo volumes, bound in cloth, price $1.75 each.

Within the Maze. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "East Lynne," $1 75
The Master of Greylands. By Mrs. Henry Wood,..... 1 75
Dene Hollow. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "Within the Maze," 1 75
Bessy Rane. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "The Channings,".... 1 75
George Canterbury's Will. By Mrs. Wood, author "Oswald Cray," 1 75
The Channings. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "Dene Hollow,"... 1 75
Roland Yorke. A Sequel to "The Channings." By Mrs. Wood,..... 1 75
Shadow of Ashlydyatt. By Mrs. Wood, author of "Bessy Rane,".... 1 75
Lord Oakburn's Daughters; or The Earl's Heirs. By Mrs. Wood,... 1 75
Verner's Pride. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "The Channings," 1 75
The Castle's Heir; or Lady Adelaide's Oath. By Mrs. Henry Wood, 1 75
Oswald Cray. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "Roland Yorke,".... 1 75
Squire Trevlyn's Heir; or Trevlyn Hold. By Mrs. Henry Wood,..... 1 75
The Red Court Farm. By Mrs. Wood, author of "Verner's Pride," 1 75
Elster's Folly. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "Castle's Heir,"... 1 75
St. Martin's Eve. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "Dene Hollow," 1 75
Mildred Arkell. By Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "East Lynne,".....1 75

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

ALEXANDER DUMAS' WORKS, BOUND IN CLOTH.

The following are cloth editions of Alexander Dumas' works, and they are each issued in large octavo volumes, bound in cloth, price $1.75 *each.*

The Three Guardsmen; or, The Three Mousquetaires. By A. Dumas, $1 75
Twenty Years After; or the "*Second Series of Three Guardsmen,*"... 1 75
Bragelonne; Son of Athos; or "*Third Series of Three Guardsmen,*" 1 75
The Iron Mask; or the "*Fourth Series of The Three Guardsmen,*".... 1 75
Louise La Valliere; or the "*Fifth Series and End of the Three Guardsmen Series,*" 1 75
The Memoirs of a Physician; or, Joseph Balsamo. Illustrated,..... 1 75
Queen's Necklace; or "*Second Series of Memoirs of a Physician,*" 1 75
Six Years Later; or the "*Third Series of Memoirs of a Physician,*" 1 75
Countess of Charny; or "*Fourth Series of Memoirs of a Physician,*" 1 75
Andree De Taverney; or "*Fifth Series of Memoirs of a Physician,*" 1 75
The Chevalier; or the "*Sixth Series and End of the Memoirs of a Physician Series,*"..... 1 75
The Adventures of a Marquis. By Alexander Dumas,..... 1 75
The Count of Monte-Cristo. By Alexander Dumas,..... 1 75
Edmond Dantes. A Sequel to the "Count of Monte-Cristo,"..... 1 75
The Countess of Monte-Cristo. A Companion to "Monte-Cristo,".... 1 75
The Forty-Five Guardsmen. By Alexander Dumas. Illustrated,... 1 75
Diana of Meridor, or Lady of Monsoreau. By Alexander Dumas,... 1 75
The Iron Hand. By Alex. Dumas, author "Count of Monte-Cristo," 1 75
Camille; or the Fate of a Coquette. (La Dame aux Camelias,)..... 1 75
The Conscript. A novel of the Days of Napoleon the First,..... 1 75
Love and Liberty. A novel of the French Revolution of 1792-1793, 1 75

GEORGE W. M. REYNOLDS' WORKS, IN CLOTH.

The following are cloth editions of G. W. M. Reynolds' works, and they are each issued in large octavo volumes, bound in cloth, price $1.75 *each.*

The Mysteries of the Court of London. By George W. M. Reynolds, 1 75
Rose Foster; or the "*Second Series of Mysteries of Court of London,*" 1 75
Caroline of Brunswick; or the "*Third Series of the Court of London,*" 1 75
Venetia Trelawney; or "*End of the Mysteries of the Court of London,*" 1 75
Lord Saxondale; or the Court of Queen Victoria. By Reynolds,..... 1 75
Count Christoval. Sequel to "Lord Saxondale." By Reynolds,..... 1 75
Rosa Lambert; or Memoirs of an Unfortunate Woman. By Reynolds, 1 75
Mary Price; or the Adventures of a Servant Maid. By Reynolds,... 1 75
Eustace Quentin. Sequel to "Mary Price." By G. W. M. Reynolds, 1 75
Joseph Wilmot; or the Memoirs of a Man Servant. By Reynolds,... 1 75
The Banker's Daughter. Sequel to "Joseph Wilmot." By Reynolds, 1 75
Kenneth. A Romance of the Highlands. By G. W. M. Reynolds, 1 75
Rye-House Plot; or the Conspirator's Daughter. By Reynolds,..... 1 75
Necromancer; or the Times of Henry the Eighth. By Reynolds,..... 1 75
The Mysteries of the Court of Naples. By G. W. M. Reynolds,..... 1 75
Wallace; the Hero of Scotland. By G. W. M. Reynolds,..... 1 75
The Gipsy Chief. By George W. M. Reynolds,..... 1 75
Robert Bruce; the Hero King of Scotland. By G. W. M. Reynolds, 1 75

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

WORKS BY THE VERY BEST AUTHORS.

The following books are each issued in one large octavo volume, bound in cloth, at $2.00 each, or each one is done up in paper cover, at $1.50 each.

The Wandering Jew. By Eugene Sue. Full of Illustrations,.....$2 00
Mysteries of Paris; and its Sequel, Gerolstein. By Eugene Sue,.... 2 00
Martin, the Foundling. By Eugene Sue. Full of Illustrations,..... 2 00
Ten Thousand a Year. By Samuel Warren. With Illustrations,.... 2 00
Washington and His Generals. By George Lippard,.. ..... 2 00
The Quaker City; or, the Monks of Monk Hall. By George Lippard, 2 00
Blanche of Brandywine. By George Lippard,..... 2 00
Paul Ardenheim; the Monk of Wissahickon. By George Lippard,. 2 00
The Mysteries of Florence. By Geo. Lippard, author "Quaker City," 2 00
The Pictorial Tower of London. By W. Harrison Ainsworth,..... 2 50

The following are each issued in one large octavo volume, bound in cloth, price each, or a cheap edition is issued in paper cover, at 75 cents each. $2.00

Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, $2 00
Harry Lorrequer. With his Confessions. By Charles Lever,...Cloth, 2 00
Jack Hinton, the Guardsman. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
Davenport Dunn. A Man of Our Day. By Charles Lever,...Cloth, 2 00
Tom Burke of Ours. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
The Knight of Gwynne. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
Arthur O'Leary. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
Con Cregan. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
Horace Templeton. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
Kate O'Donoghue. By Charles Lever,.....Cloth, 2 00
Valentine Vox, the Ventriloquist. By Harry Cockton,.....Cloth, 2 00

HUMOROUS ILLUSTRATED WORKS.

Each one is full of Illustrations, by Felix O. C. Darley, and bound in Cloth.

Major Jones' Courtship and Travels. In one vol., 29 Illustrations,.$1 75
Major Jones' Scenes in Georgia. With 16 Illustrations,..... 1 50
Swamp Doctor's Adventures in the South-West. 14 Illustrations,... 1 50
Col. Thorpe's Scenes in Arkansaw. With 16 Illustrations,..... 1 50
High Life in New York, by Jonathan Slick. With Illustrations,.... 1 50
Piney Wood's Tavern; or, Sam Slick in Texas. Illustrated,..... 1 50
Humors of Falconbridge. By J. F. Kelley. With Illustrations, ... 1 50
Simon Suggs' Adventures and Travels. With 17 Illustrations,..... 1 75
The Big Bear's Adventures and Travels. With 18 Illustrations,..... 1 75
Judge Haliburton's Yankee Stories. Illustrated,..... 1 75
Harry Coverdale's Courtship and Marriage. Illustrated,..... 1 75
Lorrimer Littlegood. Illustrated. By author of "Frank Fairlegh," 1 75
Sam Slick, the Clockmaker. By Judge Haliburton. Illustrated,... 1 75
Modern Chivalry. By Judge Breckenridge. Two vols., each..... 1 75
Neal's Charcoal Sketches. By Joseph C. Neal. 21 Illustrations,... 2 50
Major Jones's Courtship. 21 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents, cloth,..... 1 00
Major Jones's Georgia Scenes. 12 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, 1 00
Major Jones's Travels. 8 Illustrations. Paper, 75 cents, cloth,..... 1 00
Nancy Cottem's Courtship. 8 Illustrations. Paper, 50 cents, cloth, 1 00

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

NEW AND GOOD BOOKS BY BEST AUTHORS.

Consuelo. By George Sand. One volume, 12mo., bound in cloth,...$1 50
The Countess of Rudolstadt. Sequel to "Consuelo." 12mo., cloth,.. 1 50
Indiana. A Novel. By George Sand, author of "Consuelo," cloth, 1 50
Jealousy; or, Teverino. By George Sand, author "Consuelo," cloth, 1 50
Fanchon, the Cricket; or, La Petite Fadette. By George Sand, cloth, 1 50
The Dead Secret. By Wilkie Collins, author of "Basil," cloth,..... 1 50
The Crossed Path; or Basil. By Wilkie Collins, cloth,..... 1 50
John Jasper's Secret. *Sequel to "Mystery of Edwin Drood,"* cloth,... 1 50
The Life of Charles Dickens. By Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie, cloth, 1 50
The Lamplighter's Story, with others. By Charles Dickens, cloth,... 1 50
The Old Stone Mansion. By author of "Heiress of Sweetwater," cloth, 1 50
Rose Foster. By George W. M. Reynolds, Esq., cloth,..... 1 75
Lord Montagu's Page. By G. P. R. James, author 'Cavalier,' cloth, 1 75
The Earl of Mayfield. By Thomas P. May, cloth, black and gold,.. 1 50
Myrtle Lawn. A Novel. By Robert E. Ballard, cloth,..... 1 50
Corinne; or, Italy. A Love Story. By Madame de Stael, cloth,.... 1 00
Cyrilla; or Mysterious Engagement. By author of "Initials," cloth, 1 00
Treason at Home. A Novel. By Mrs. Greenough, cloth..... 1 75
Letters from Europe. By Colonel John W. Forney. Bound in cloth, 1 75
Frank Fairlegh. By author of "Lewis Arundel," cloth,..... 1 75
Lewis Arundel. By author of "Frank Fairlegh," cloth,..... 1 75
Harry Racket Scapegrace. By the author of "Frank Fairlegh," cloth, 1 75
Tom Racquet. By author of "Frank Fairlegh," cloth,..... 1 75
La Gaviota; the Sea-Gull. By Fernan Caballero, cloth,..... 1 50
Aurora Floyd. By Miss M. E. Braddon. Bound in cloth,..... 1 00
The Laws and Practice of the Game of Euchre and Draw Poker, as adopted by the Euchre Club of Washington, D. C. Cloth,..... 1 00
Youth of Shakspeare, author "Shakspeare and His Friends," cloth, 1 25
Shakspeare and His Friends, author "Youth of Shakspeare," cloth, 1 25
The Secret Passion, author of "Shakspeare and His Friends," cloth, 1 25
Father Tom and the Pope; or, A Night at the Vatican, illus., cloth, 1 00
Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott. One 8vo. volume, cloth,..... 2 50
Life of Sir Walter Scott. By John G. Lockhart. With Portrait,..... 2 50
Tales of a Grandfather & History of Scotland, by Walter Scott, cloth, 2 50
Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, by Sir Walter Scott. One 8vo. vol., cloth, 2 50
Miss Pardoe's Choice Novels. In one large octavo volume, cloth,... 4 00
Life, Speeches and Martyrdom of Abraham Lincoln. Illus., cloth,.. 1 75
Rome and the Papacy. A History of the Men, Manners and Temporal Government of Rome in the Nineteenth Century, cloth..... 1 75
The French, German, Spanish, Latin and Italian Languages Without a Master. Whereby any one of these Languages can be learned without a Teacher. By A. H. Monteith. One volume, cloth,..... 2 00
Liebig's Complete Works on Chemistry. By Justus Liebig, cloth,... 2 00
Life and Adventures of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, cloth,..... 1 75
Tan-go-ru-a. An Historical Drama, in Prose. By Mr. Moorhead,.... 1 00
The Impeachment Trial of President Andrew Johnson. Cloth,..... 1 50
Trial of the Assassins for the Murder of Abraham Lincoln. Cloth,... 1 50

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

NEW AND GOOD BOOKS BY BEST AUTHORS.

Beautiful Snow, and Other Poems. *New Illustrated Edition.* By J. W. Watson. With Illustrations by E. L. Henry. One volume, morocco cloth, black and gold, gilt top, side, and back, price $2.00; or in maroon morocco cloth, full gilt edges, full gilt back, full gilt sides, $3 00

The Outcast, and Other Poems. By J. W. Watson. One volume, green morocco cloth, gilt top, side and back, price $2.00; or in maroon morocco cloth, full gilt edges, full gilt back, full gilt sides, ... 3 00

The Young Magdalen; and Other Poems. Bound in green morocco cloth, gilt top, side, and back, price $3.00; or in full gilt,.... 4 00

Hans Breitmann's Ballads. By Charles G. Leland. *Containing the "First," "Second," "Third," "Fourth," and "Fifth Series" of Hans Breitmann's Ballads.* Complete in one large volume, bound in morocco cloth, gilt side, gilt top, and full gilt back, with beveled boards. With a full and complete Glossary to the whole work,..... 4 00

Meister Karl's Sketch Book. By Charles G. Leland, (Hans Breitmann.) Complete in one volume, green morocco cloth, gilt side, gilt top, gilt back, with beveled boards, price $2.50, or in maroon morocco cloth, full gilt edges, full gilt back, full gilt sides, etc.,..... 3 50

The Ladies' Guide to True Politeness and Perfect Manners. By Miss Leslie. Every lady should have it. Cloth, full gilt back,... 1 75

The Ladies' Complete Guide to Needlework and Embroidery. With 113 illustrations. By Miss Lambert. Cloth, full gilt back,..... 1 75

The Ladies' Work Table Book. 27 illustrations. Paper 50 cts., cloth, 1 00

Dow's Short Patent Sermons. By Dow, Jr. In 4 vols., cloth, each.... 1 50

Wild Oats Sown Abroad. A Spicy Book. By T. B. Witmer, cloth,... 1 50

The Miser's Daughter. By William Harrison Ainsworth, cloth,..... 1 75

Across the Atlantic. Letters from France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, and England. By C. H. Haeseler, M.D. Bound in cloth.... 2 00

Popery Exposed. An Exposition of Popery as it was and is, cloth, 1 75

The Adopted Heir. By Miss Pardoe, author of "The Earl's Secret," 1 75

Coal, Coal Oil, and all other Minerals in the Earth. By Eli Bowen, 1 75

Secession, Coercion, and Civil War. By J. B. Jones,..... ..... 1 75

Lives of Jack Sheppard and Guy Fawkes. Illustrated. One vol., cloth, 1 75

Christy and White's Complete Ethiopian Melodies, bound in cloth,... 1 00

Historical Sketches of Plymouth, Luzerne Co., Penna. By Hendrick B. Wright, of Wilkesbarre. With Twenty-five Photographs..... 4 00

Dr. Hollick's great work on the Anatomy and Physiology of the Human Figure, with colored dissected plates of the Human Figure, 2 00

Riddell's Model Architect. With 22 large full page colored illustrations, and 44 plates of ground plans, with plans, specifications, costs of building, etc. One large quarto volume, bound,..... 15 00

HARRY COCKTON'S LAUGHABLE NOVELS.

Valentine Vox, Ventriloquist,..	75	The Fatal Marriages,.....	75
Valentine Vox, cloth,.....	2 00	The Steward,.....	75
Sylvester Sound, ...	75	Percy Effingham, ...	75
The Love Match, ...	75	The Prince,.....	75

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

WORKS IN SETS BY THE BEST AUTHORS.

Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth's Popular Novels. 43 vols. in all,$75 25
Mrs. Ann S. Stephens' Celebrated Novels. 23 volumes in all,..... 40 25
Miss Eliza A. Dupuy's Works. Fourteen volumes in all,..... 24 50
Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz's Novels. Twelve volumes in all,..... 21 00
Mrs. C. A. Warfield's Novels. Nine volumes in all,..... 15 75
Frederika Bremer's Novels. Six volumes in all,..... 10 50
T. Adolphus Trollope's Works. Seven volumes in all,..... 12 25
James A. Maitland's Novels. Seven volumes in all,..... 12 25
Charles Lever's Works. Ten volumes in all,..... 20 00
Alexander Dumas' Works. Twenty-one volumes in all,..... 36 75
George W. M. Reynolds' Works. Eighteen volumes in all,..... 31 50
Frank Fairlegh's Works. Six volumes in all,..... 10 50
Q. K. Philander Doestick's Novels. Four volumes in all,..... 7 00
Cook Books. The best in the world. Eleven volumes in all,..... 18 25
Henry Morford's Novels. Three volumes in all,..... 5 25
Mrs. Henry Wood's Novels. Seventeen volumes in all,..... 29 75
Emerson Bennett's Novels. Seven volumes in all,..... 12 25
Green's Works on Gambling. Four volumes in all,..... 7 00
American Humorous Works. Illustrated. Twelve volumes in all, 19 50
Eugene Sue's Best Works. Three volumes in all,..... 6 00
George Sand's Works. Consuelo, etc. Five volumes in all,..... 7 50
George Lippard's Works. Five volumes in all,..... 10 00
Dow's Short Patent Sermons. Four volumes in all,..... 6 00
The Waverley Novels. *New National Edition.* Five 8vo. vols., cloth, 15 00
Charles Dickens' Works. *New National Edition.* 7 volumes, cloth, 20 00
Charles Dickens' Works. *Illustrated 8vo. Edition.* 18 vols., cloth, 27 00
Charles Dickens' Works. *New American Edition.* 22 vols., cloth, 33 00
Charles Dickens' Works. *Green Cloth 12mo. Edition.* 22 vols., cloth, 44 00
Charles Dickens' Works. *Illustrated 12mo. Edition.* 36 vols., cloth, 45 00

T. S. ARTHUR'S GREAT TEMPERANCE WORKS.

Six Nights with the Washingtonians, Illustrated T. S. Arthur's Great Temperance Stories. Large Subscription Edition, cloth, gilt, $3.50; Red Roan, $4.50; Full Turkey Antique, Full Gilt..... 6 00
The Latimer Family; or the Bottle and Pledge. By T. S. Arthur, cloth, 1 00

MODEL SPEAKERS AND READERS.

Comstock's Elocution and Model Speaker. Intended for the use of Schools, Colleges, and for private Study, for the Promotion of Health, Cure of Stammering, and Defective Articulation. By Andrew Comstock and Philip Lawrence. With 236 Illustrations.. 2 00
The Lawrence Speaker. A Selection of Literary Gems in Poetry and Prose, designed for the use of Colleges, Schools, Seminaries, Literary Societies. By Philip Lawrence, Professor of Elocution. 600 pages.. 2 00
Comstock's Colored Chart. Being a perfect Alphabet of the English Language, Graphic and Typic, with exercises in Pitch, Force and Gesture, and Sixty-Eight colored figures, representing the various postures and different attitudes to be used in declamation. On a large Roller. Every School should have a copy of it..... 5 00

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

CHARLES DICKENS' WORKS.

☞ GREAT REDUCTION IN THEIR PRICES. ☜

ILLUSTRATED OCTAVO EDITION.

Reduced in price from $2.50 *to* $1.50 *a volume.*

This edition is printed from large type, double column, octavo page, each book being complete in one volume, the whole containing near Six Hundred Illustrations, by Cruikshank, Phiz, Browne, Maclise, and other artists.

Our Mutual Friend,.....Cloth,	$1.50	David Copperfield,.....Cloth,	$1.50
Pickwick Papers,.....Cloth,	1.50	Barnaby Rudge,.....Cloth,	1.50
Nicholas Nickleby,.....Cloth,	1.50	Martin Chuzzlewit,.....Cloth,	1.50
Great Expectations,.....Cloth,	1.50	Old Curiosity Shop,.....Cloth,	1.50
Lamplighter's Story,....Cloth,	1.50	Sketches by "Boz,".....Cloth,	1.50
Oliver Twist,.....Cloth,	1.50	Christmas Stories,.....Cloth,	1.50
Bleak House,.....Cloth,	1.50	Dickens' New Stories,...Cloth,	1.50
Little Dorrit,.....Cloth,	1.50	A Tale of Two Cities,...Cloth,	1.50
Dombey and Son,.....Cloth,	1.50	Amer. Notes, Pic-Nic Papers,	1.50

Price of a set, in Black cloth, in eighteen volumes,.....$27.00
" " Full sheep, Library style,..... 40.00
" " Half calf, sprinkled edges,..... 48.00
" " Half calf, marbled edges,..... 54.00
" " Half calf, antique, or Half calf, full gilt backs,... 60.00

ILLUSTRATED DUODECIMO EDITION.

Reduced in price from $2.00 *to* $1.25 *a volume.*

This edition is printed on the finest paper, from large, clear type, leaded, that all can read, containing Six Hundred full page Illustrations, on tinted paper, from designs by Cruikshank, Phiz, Browne, Maclise, McLenan, and other artists. This is the only edition published that contains all the original illustrations, as selected by Mr. Charles Dickens. Complete in 36 *volumes, bound in back, morocco cloth, price* $45.00 *a set.*

"NEW NATIONAL EDITION" OF DICKENS' WORKS.

This is the cheapest bound edition of the entire works of Charles Dickens ever published, *all* his writings being contained in *seven large octavo volumes*, with a portrait of Charles Dickens, and other illustrations.

Price of a set, in Black cloth, in seven volumes,.....$20.00
" " Full sheep, Library style,..... 23.00
" " Half calf, antique, or Half calf, full gilt backs,... 25.00

GREEN MOROCCO CLOTH, DUODECIMO EDITION.

This is the "People's Duodecimo Edition" in a new style of Binding, in Green Morocco Cloth, Bevelled Boards, Full Gilt descriptive back, and Medallion Portrait on sides in gilt, in Twenty-two handy volumes, 12mo., *fine paper, large clear type, and Two Hundred Illustrations on tinted paper. Price* $44 *a set, and each set put up in a neat and strong box. This is the handsomest and best edition ever published for the price.*

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

CHARLES DICKENS' WORKS.

☞ GREAT REDUCTION IN THEIR PRICES. ☜

PETERSONS' NEW AMERICAN EDITION OF DICKENS' WORKS.

This new edition of Charles Dickens' Writings is in twenty-two volumes, and for beauty and cheapness far surpasses any ever before issued. It is called "Petersons' New American Edition," and is printed on fine paper, from large, clear type, leaded, with original illustrations as selected by Mr. Dickens and designed by Phiz, Cruikshank, Browne, Maclise and other artists, and bound very gorgeously in red vellum, black and gold, with the cover filled with the author's principal characters, which he has made so world-famous. There in one corner is the immortal Pickwick, in another the well-known Micawber, the learned Capt. Cuttle, poor little Oliver Twist, the misguided Grandfather, the mean, hypocritical Pecksniff, the mercenary Squeers, Boots, The Beadle, etc., and all of this for the small sum of $1.50 a volume, or a complete set in 22 volumes, each set put up in a neat box, for $33.00, making a very handsome and unique edition.

CHEAP PAPER COVER EDITION OF DICKENS' WORKS.

Each book being complete in one large octavo volume.

Pickwick Papers,	50	Bleak House,	50
Nicholas Nickleby,	50	Little Dorrit,	50
Dombey and Son,	50	Christmas Stories,	50
Our Mutual Friend,	50	Barnaby Rudge,	50
David Copperfield,	50	Sketches by "Boz,"	50
Martin Chuzzlewit,	50	Great Expectations,	50
Old Curiosity Shop,	50	Joseph Grimaldi,	50
Oliver Twist,	50	The Pic-Nic Papers,	50
American Notes,	25	The Haunted House,	25
Hard Times,	25	Uncommercial Traveller,	25
A Tale of Two Cities,	25	A House to Let,	25
Somebody's Luggage,	25	Perils of English Prisoners,	25
Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings,	25	Wreck of the Golden Mary,	25
Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy,	25	Tom Tiddler's Ground,	25
Mugby Junction,	25	Dickens' New Stories,	25
Dr. Marigold's Prescriptions,	25	Lazy Tour of Idle Apprentices,	25
Mystery of Edwin Drood,	25	The Holly-Tree Inn,	25
Message from the Sea,	25	No Thoroughfare,	25
Hunted Down; and Other Reprinted Pieces,			50

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF CHARLES DICKENS.

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF CHARLES DICKENS. By *Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie*, containing a full history of his Life, his Uncollected Pieces, in Prose and Verse; Personal Recollections and Anecdotes; His Last Will in full; and Letters from Mr. Dickens never before published. With a Portrait and Autograph of Charles Dickens. Complete in one large duodecimo volume, in black cloth, or in red vellum. Price $1.50.

☞Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.

ALEXANDER DUMAS' WONDERFUL WORKS.

Count of Monte-Cristo,.....$1 00
Edmond Dantes,..... 75
The Three Guardsmen,..... 75
Twenty Years After,..... 75
Bragelonne, ... 75
The Iron Mask,..... 1 00
Louise La Valliere,..... 1 00
Diana of Meridor,..... 1 00
Adventures of a Marquis,..... 1 00
Love and Liberty, (1792–'93).. 1 50
Memoirs of a Physician; or, Joseph Balsamo,..... .....$1 00
Queen's Necklace,..... 1 00
Six Years Later,..... 1 00
Countess of Charny,..... 1 00
Andree de Taverney,..... ... 1 00
The Chevalier,..... 1 00
Forty-five Guardsmen,..... 1 00
The Iron Hand,..... 1 00
The Conscript,..... 1 50
Camille; or, The Fate of a Coquette, (La Dame Aux Camelias,)..... 1 50
Countess of Monte-Cristo, a companion to Count of Monte-Cristo,... 1 00

The above are each in paper cover, or in cloth, price $1.75 each.

The Mohicans of Paris,..... 75
The Horrors of Paris,..... 75
The Fallen Angel,..... 75
Felina de Chambure,..... 75
Sketches in France,..... 75
Isabel of Bavaria,..... 75
The Man with Five Wives,..... 75
Annette; or, Lady of Pearls,... 75
Twin Lieutenants,..... 50
George; or, Isle of France,..... 50
Madame de Chamblay,..... 50
The Black Tulip,..... 50
The Corsican Brothers,..... 50
The Count of Moret,..... 50
The Marriage Verdict,..... 50
Buried Alive,..... 25

GEORGE W. M. REYNOLDS' HISTORICAL NOVELS.

Mysteries Court of London,....$1 00
Rose Foster,..... 1 50
Caroline of Brunswick,..... 1 00
Venetia Trelawney,..... 1 00
Lord Saxondale,..... 1 00
Count Christoval,..... 1 00
Rosa Lambert,..... 1 00
Wallace, the Hero of Scotland, 1 00
Mary Price,.....$1 00
Eustace Quentin,..... 1 00
Joseph Wilmot,..... 1 00
Banker's Daughter,..... 1 00
Kenneth,..... 1 00
The Rye-House Plot,..... 1 00
The Necromancer,..... 1 00
The Gypsy Chief,..... 1 00
The Mysteries of the Court of Naples, full of Illustrations..... 1 00
Robert Bruce, the Hero-King of Scotland, full of Illustrations..... 1 00

The above are each in paper cover, or in cloth, price $1.75 each.

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots,... 75
The Opera Dancer,..... 75
Child of Waterloo,..... 75
Isabella Vincent,..... 75
Vivian Bertram,..... 75
Countess of Lascelles,..... 75
Duke of Marchmont,..... 75
Massacre of Glencoe,..... 75
Loves of the Harem,..... 75
The Soldier's Wife,..... 75
May Middleton,..... 75
Ellen Percy,..... 75
Agnes Evelyn, ... 75
Pickwick Abroad,..... 75
Parricide,..... 75
Discarded Queen,..... 75
The Countess and the Page,..... 75
Life in Paris,..... 50
Edgar Montrose,..... 50
The Ruined Gamester,..... 50
Clifford and the Actress,..... 50
Ciprina; or, the Secrets,..... 50

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

CHARLES LEVER'S GREAT WORKS.

Charles O'Malley,	75	Arthur O'Leary,	75
Harry Lorrequer,	75	Con Cregan,	75
Jack Hinton,	75	Davenport Dunn,	75
Tom Burke of Ours,	75	Horace Templeton,	75
Knight of Gwynne,	75	Kate O'Donoghue,	75

Above are in paper cover, or a fine edition is in cloth at $2.00 each.

A Rent in a Cloud,	50	St. Patrick's Eve,	50

Ten Thousand a Year, in one volume, paper cover, $1.50; or in cloth, 2 00
The Diary of a Medical Student, by author "Ten Thousand a Year," 75

MRS. HENRY WOOD'S MASTERLY BOOKS.

The Master of Greylands,	$1 50	The Shadow of Ashlydyat,	$1 50
Within the Maze,	1 50	Squire Trevlyn's Heir,	1 50
Dene Hollow,	1 50	Oswald Cray,	1 50
Bessy Rane,	1 50	Mildred Arkell,	1 50
George Canterbury's Will,	1 50	The Red Court Farm,	1 50
Verner's Pride,	1 50	Elster's Folly,	1 50
The Channings,	1 50	Saint Martin's Eve,	1 50

Roland Yorke. A Sequel to "The Channings," 1 50
Lord Oakburn's Daughters; or, The Earl's Heirs, 1 50
The Castle's Heir; or, Lady Adelaide's Oath, 1 50

The above are each in paper cover, or in cloth, price $1.75 each.

Edina; or, Missing Since Midnight. Cloth, $1.00, or in paper cover, 75
The Mystery. A Love Story. Cloth, $1.00, or in paper cover, 75

Parkwater. Told in Twilight,	75	A Life's Secret,	50
The Lost Bank Note,	50	The Haunted Tower	50
The Lost Will,	50	The Runaway Match,	25
Orville College,	50	Martyn Ware's Temptation,	25
Five Thousand a Year,	25	Foggy Night at Offord,	25
The Diamond Bracelet,	25	William Allair,	25
Clara Lake's Dream,	25	A Light and a Dark Christmas,	25
The Nobleman's Wife,	25	The Smuggler's Ghost	25
Frances Hildyard,	25	Rupert Hall,	25
Cyrilla Maude's First Love,	25	My Husband's First Love,	25
My Cousin Caroline's Wedding	25	Marrying Beneath Your Station	25

EUGENE SUE'S LIFE-LIKE WORKS.

The Wandering Jew,	$1 50	First Love,	50
The Mysteries of Paris,	1 50	Woman's Love,	50
Martin, the Foundling,	1 50	Female Bluebeard,	50
Above are in cloth at $2.00 each.		Man-of-War's-Man,	50

Life and Adventures of Raoul de Surville. A Tale of the Empire, 25

WILLIAM H. MAXWELL'S WORKS.

Wild Sports of the West,	75	Brian O'Lynn,	75
Stories of Waterloo,	75	Life of Grace O'Malley,	50

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

HUMOROUS AMERICAN WORKS.

With Illuminated Covers, and beautifully Illustrated by Felix O. C. Darley.

Major Jones's Courtship. With Illustrations by Darley,..... 75
Major Jones's Travels. Full of Illustrations 75
Major Jones's Georgia Scenes, with Illustrations by Darley,..... 75
Nancy Cottem's Courtship, by author of Major Jones's Courtship,.... 50
The Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs. Illustrated,..... 75
Major Jones's Chronicles of Pineville. Illustrated,..... 75
Polly Peablossom's Wedding. With Illustrations,..... 75
Widow Rugby's Husband. Full of Illustrations,..... 75
The Big Bear of Arkansas. Illustrated by Darley,..... 75
Western Scenes; or, Life on the Prairie. Illustrated,..... 75
Streaks of Squatter Life and Far West Scenes. Illustrated,..... 75
Pickings from the New Orleans Picayune. Illustrated,..... 75
Stray Subjects Arrested and Bound Over. Illustrated,..... 75
The Louisiana Swamp Doctor. Full of Illustrations,..... 75
Charcoal Sketches. By Joseph C. Neal. Illustrated,..... 75
Peter Faber's Misfortunes. By Joseph C. Neal. Illustrated,..... 75
Peter Ploddy and other Oddities. By Joseph C. Neal,..... 75
Yankee Among the Mermaids. By William E. Burton..... 75
The Drama in Pokerville. By J. M. Field. Illustrated,..... 75
New Orleans Sketch Book. With Illustrations by Darley,..... 75
The Deer Stalkers. By Frank Forester. Illustrated,..... 75
The Quorndon Hounds. By Frank Forester. Illustrated,..... 75
My Shooting Box. By Frank Forester. Illustrated,..... 75
The Warwick Woodlands. By Frank Forester. Illustrated,..... 75
Adventures of Captain Farrago. By H. H. Brackenridge,..... 75
Adventures of Major O'Regan. By H. H. Brackenridge, ... 75
Sol Smith's Theatrical Apprenticeship. Illustrated,..... 75
Sol Smith's Theatrical Journey-Work. Illustrated,..... 75
Quarter Race in Kentucky. With Illustrations by Darley,..... 75
The Mysteries of the Backwoods. By T. B. Thorpe,..... 75
Percival Mayberry's Adventures. By J. H. Ingraham,..... 75
Sam Slick's Yankee Yarns and Yankee Letters,..... 75
Adventures of Fudge Fumble; or, Love Scrapes of his Life,..... 75
Aunt Patty's Scrap Bag. By Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz,..... 75
Following the Drum. By Mrs. Gen. Viele,..... 50
The American Joe Miller. With 100 Engravings,..... 50

SAMUEL WARREN'S BEST BOOKS.

Ten Thousand a Year, paper, $1 50 | The Diary of a Medical Stu-
Ten Thousand a Year, cloth,.. 2 00 | dent,..... 75

G. P. R. JAMES'S FASCINATING BOOKS.

Lord Montague's Page. Paper cover, $1.50, or in cloth,.....$1 75
The Cavalier. By the author of "Lord Montague's Page," cloth,.... 1 00
The Man in Black,..... 75 | Arrah Neil,..... 75
Mary of Burgundy,..... 75 | Eva St. Clair,..... 50

☞ Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.

MISS PARDOE'S FASCINATING WORKS.

Confessions of a Pretty Woman, 75
The Wife's Trials,..... 75
The Jealous Wife,..... 75
The Rival Beauties,..... 75
Romance of the Harem,..... 75

Each of the above five books are also bound in cloth, at $1.00 each.

The Adopted Heir. One volume, paper, $1.50; or in cloth,.....$1 75
The Earl's Secret. One volume, paper, $1.50; or in cloth, ... 1 75

O'MALLEY AND HARRY LORREQUER.

Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon. By Charles Lever. *Four different editions:* one at 75 cents in paper cover, and three bound in cloth, viz.: Sterling Series, $1.00, People's Edition, $1.50, & Library Edition, $2.00.

Harry Lorrequer. *With His Confessions.* By Charles Lever. *Four different editions:* one at 75 cents in paper cover, and three bound in cloth, viz.: Sterling Series, at $1.00, People's Edition, at $1.50, and Library Edition, at $2.00.

T. S. ARTHUR'S HOUSEHOLD NOVELS.

The Lost Bride,..... 50
The Two Brides,..... 50
Love in a Cottage,..... 50
Love in High Life,..... 50
Year after Marriage,..... 50
The Lady at Home,..... 50
Cecelia Howard,..... 50
Orphan Children,..... 50
Debtor's Daughter,..... 50
The Divorced Wife,..... 50
Mary Moreton,..... 50
Pride and Prudence,..... 50
Agnes; or, the Possessed,..... 50
Lucy Sandford,..... 50
The Banker's Wife,..... 50
The Two Merchants,..... 50
Trial and Triumph,..... 50
The Iron Rule,..... 50
Insubordination; or, the Shoemaker's Daughters,..... 50
The Latimer Family; or, The Bottle and the Pledge. Illustrated,..... 50
Six Nights with the Washingtonians; and other Temperance Tales. By T. S. Arthur. With original Illustrations, by George Cruikshank. One large octavo volume, bound in beveled boards, $3.50; red roan, full gilt back, $4.50; or full Turkey morocco, full gilt,... 6 00
Lizzy Glenn; or, the Trials of a Seamstress. Cloth $1.75; or paper, 1 50

MRS. GREY'S CELEBRATED NOVELS.

Cousin Harry,.....$1 50
The Little Beauty,.....$1 50

The above are each in paper cover, or in cloth, price $1.75 each.

A Marriage in High Life,..... 50
Gipsy's Daughter,..... 50
Old Dower House,..... 50
Belle of the Family,..... 50
Duke and Cousin,..... 50
The Little Wife,..... 50
Lena Cameron,..... 50
Sybil Lennard,..... 50
Manœuvring Mother 50
The Baronet's Daughters,..... 50
Young Prima Donna,..... 50
Hyacinthe,..... 25
Alice Seymour,..... 25
Mary Seaham,..... 75
Passion and Principle,..... 75
The Flirt,..... 75
Good Society,..... 75
Lion-Hearted,..... 75

Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.

CAPTAIN MARRYATT'S GREAT WORKS.

Jacob Faithful,	50	Newton Forster,	50
Japhet in Search of a Father,	50	King's Own,	50
Phantom Ship,	50	Pirate and Three Cutters,	50
Midshipman Easy,	50	Peter Simple,	50
Pacha of Many Tales,	50	Percival Keene,	50
Frank Mildmay, Naval Officer,	50	Poor Jack,	50
Snarleyow,	50	Sea King,	50

REVOLUTIONARY STORIES.

The Brigand,	50	Old Put; or, Days of 1776,	50
Ralph Runnion,	50	Legends of Mexico,	50
Seven Brothers of Wyoming,	50	Grace Dudley,	50
The Rebel Bride,	50	The Guerilla Chief,	75
The Flying Artillerist,	50	The Quaker Soldier, paper,	1 50
Wau-nan-gee,	50	do. do. cloth,	1 75

J. F. SMITH'S WORKS.

The Usurer's Victim; or, Thomas Balscombe,	75	Adelaide Waldegrave; or, the Trials of a Governess,	75

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH'S WORKS.

Life of Jack Sheppard,	50	Life of Dick Turpin,	50
Life of Guy Fawkes,	75	Life of Davy Crockett,	50
Court of the Stuarts,	75	Life of Grace O'Malley,	50
Windsor Castle,	75	Desperadoes of the New World,	50
The Star Chamber,	75	Life of Henry Thomas,	25
Old St. Paul's,	75	Life of Ninon De L'Enclos,	25
Court of Queen Anne,	50	Life of Arthur Spring,	25

The Tower of London, with 93 illustrations, paper cover, $1.50, cloth, 2 50
The Miser's Daughter, paper cover, $1.00, or in cloth, 1 75
Lives of Jack Sheppard and Guy Fawkes, in one volume, cloth, 1 75

GUSTAVE AIMARD'S FRONTIER STORIES.

The Prairie Flower,	50	Trapper's Daughter,	75
The Indian Scout,	50	The Tiger Slayer,	75
The Trail Hunter,	75	The Gold Seekers,	75
The Indian Chief,	75	The Rebel Chief,	75
The Red Track,	75	The Border Rifles,	75
The White Scalper,	50	Pirates of the Prairies,	75
The Freebooters,	50		

ELLEN PICKERING'S EXQUISITE NOVELS.

Poor Cousin,	50	The Grumbler,	75
Orphan Niece,	50	Marrying for Money,	75
Kate Walsingham,	50	Who Shall be Heir?	38
Ellen Wareham,	38	The Squire,	38

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

FRANK FAIRLEGH'S GREAT WORKS.

Frank Fairlegh,.....	75	Harry Racket Scapegrace,.....	75
Lewis Arundel,.....	1 00	Tom Racquet,.....	75

Finer editions of the above are also issued in cloth, at $1.75 each.

Harry Coverdale's Courtship,	1 75	Lorrimer Littlegood,.....	1 75

The above are each in cloth, or in paper cover, price $1.50 each.

The Colville Family. By author of "Frank Fairlegh,"..... 50

SEQUEL TO "DICKENS' MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD."

JOHN JASPER'S SECRET. *Being the sequel to Charles Dickens' novel of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood."* By Charles Dickens, Jr., and Wilkie Collins. With eighteen full page illustrative engravings, on tinted paper, of the principal scenes and personages in the novel. No set of Dickens can be complete without a copy of "John Jasper's Secret" is in the set. Complete in one large duodecimo volume, bound in black morocco cloth, or in red vellum. Price $1.50.

THE LAMPLIGHTER'S STORY. BY CHARLES DICKENS.

This volume contains, besides "THE LAMPLIGHTER'S STORY," his Prize Story of HUNTED DOWN, with seven illustrations; THE DETECTIVE POLICE, ON DUTY WITH INSPECTOR FIELD; DOWN WITH THE TIDE; THE CHRISTMAS TREE; A CHILD'S DREAM OF A STAR, and several other Novellettes. Handsomely bound in Morocco Cloth, Gold and Black, 12mo., price $1.50.

LIVES OF NOTED HIGHWAYMEN, ETC.

Life of John A. Murrel,.....	50	Life of Davy Crockett,.....	50
Life of Joseph T. Hare,.....	50	Life of Sybil Grey,.....	50
Life of Col. Monroe Edwards,	50	Life of Jonathan Wild,.....	25
Life of Jack Sheppard,.....	50	Life of Henry Thomas,.....	25
Life of Jack Rann,.....	50	Life of Arthur Spring,.....	25
Life of Dick Turpin,.....	50	Life of Jack Ketch,.....	25
Life of Helen Jewett,.....	50	Life of Ninon De L'Enclos,.....	25
Desperadoes of the New World,	50	Lives of the Felons,.....	25
Mysteries of New Orleans,.....	50	Life of Mrs. Whipple,.....	25
The Robber's Wife,.....	50	Life of Biddy Woodhull,.....	25
Obi; or, Three Fingered Jack,	50	Life of Mother Brownrigg,.....	25
Kit Clayton.....	50	Dick Parker, the Pirate,.....	25
Life of Tom Waters,.....	50	Life of Mary Bateman,.....	25
Nat Blake,.....	50	Life of Captain Blood,.....	25
Bill Horton,.....	50	Capt. Blood and the Beagles,..	25
Galloping Gus,.....	50	Sixteen-Stringed Jack's Fight for Life,.....	25
Life & Trial of Antoine Probst,	50	Highwayman's Avenger,.....	25
Ned Hastings,.....	50	Life of Raoul De Surville,.....	25
Eveleen Wilson,.....	50	Life of Rody the Rover,.....	25
Diary of a Pawnbroker,.....	50	Life of Galloping Dick,.....	25
Silver and Pewter,.....	50	Life of Guy Fawkes,.....	75
Sweeney Todd,.....	50	Vidocq, the French Detective,	75
Life of Grace O'Malley,.....	50		

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

GEORGE LIPPARD'S WEIRD STORIES.

The Quaker City, ... $1 50
Paul Ardenheim, ... 1 50
Blanche of Brandywine, ... 1 50
The Legends of the American Revolution; or, Washington and his Generals, ... 1 50
Mysteries of Florence 1 00
Above in cloth at $2.00 each.

The Empire City, ... 75
Memoirs of a Preacher, ... 75
The Nazarene, ... 75
Washington and his Men, ... 75
Legends of Mexico, ... 50
The Entranced, ... 25
The Robbers, ... 25
The Bank Director's Son, ... 25

SIR E. L. BULWER'S NOVELS.

The Roue, ... 50
The Oxonians, ... 50

The Courtier, ... 25
Falkland, ... 25

MRS. C. J. NEWBY'S GRAPHIC NOVELS.

Sunshine and Shadow, ... 50
Kate Kennedy, ... 50
Wondrous Strange 50
Margaret Hamilton, ... 50
Right and Left, ... 50

Trodden Down, ... 50
Married, ... 50
Common Sense, ... 50
Only Temper, ... 50

LIST OF BEST SEA TALES PUBLISHED.

Adventures of Ben Brace, ... 75
Jack Adams, the Mutineer, ... 75
Jack Ariel's Adventures, ... 75
Petrel; or, Life on the Ocean, ... 75
Life of Paul Periwinkle, ... 75
Life of Tom Bowling, ... 75
Percy Effingham, ... 75
Red King, ... 50
The Corsair, ... 50
The Doomed Ship, ... 50
The Three Pirates, ... 50
The Flying Dutchman, ... 50
The Flying Yankee, ... 50
The Yankee Middy, ... 50
The Gold Seekers, ... 50
The King's Cruisers, ... 50
Life of Alexander Tardy, ... 50
Red Wing, ... 50
Yankee Jack, ... 50
Yankees in Japan, ... 50
Morgan, the Buccaneer, ... 50
Jack Junk, ... 50
Davis, the Pirate, ... 50
Valdez, the Pirate, ... 50
Harry Tempest, ... 50

Gallant Tom, ... 50
Harry Helm, ... 50
Rebel and Rover, ... 50
Man-of-War's-Man, ... 50
Dark Shades of City Life, ... 25
The Rats of the Seine, ... 25
Charles Ransford, ... 25
The Iron Cross, ... 25
The River Pirates, ... 25
The Pirate's Son, ... 25
Jacob Faithful, ... 50
Phantom Ship, ... 50
Midshipman Easy, ... 50
Pacha of Many Tales, ... 50
Naval Officer, ... 50
Snarleyow, ... 50
Newton Forster, ... 50
King's Own, ... 50
Japhet, ... 50
Pirate and Three Cutters, ... 50
Peter Simple, ... 50
Percival Keene, ... 50
Poor Jack, ... 50
Sea King, ... 50

☞ **Above Books will be sent, postage paid, on receipt of Retail Price, by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.**

T. B. PETERSON AND BROTHERS,

306 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia,

Desire to direct the close attention of all lovers of good novel reading to the works and authors contained in their new catalogue, just issued. A strict scrutiny is solicited, because the books enumerated in it are among the most popular now in existence. In supplying your wants and taste in the reading line, it is of the first importance that you should give special attention to what is popularly designated entertaining reading matter. No library is either attractive or complete without a collection of novels and romances. The experience of many years has demonstrated that light reading is essential to even the most studious men and women, furnishing the mind with healthful recreation; while to the young, and to those that have not cultivated a taste for solid works of science, it forms one of the best possible training schools, gradually establishing, in a pleasant manner, that habit of concentration of thought absolutely necessary to read understandingly the more ponderous works, which treat of political economy, the sciences, and of the arts.

We publish and sell at very low rates, full and varied editions of the works of all the famous American and Foreign Novelists, whose writings are very entertaining, specially adapted for all readers. The most of them are bound in strong cloth binding, and also in paper covers. Examination is asked for our editions of the writings of MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH, whose romances are always in demand; MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS, the well-known favorite; MRS. HENRY WOOD, the authoress of "East Lynne;" MRS. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ, whose stories of Southern life stand unparalleled in their simple truth and exquisite beauty; MRS. C. A. WARFIELD, another very popular Southern writer; MISS ELIZA A. DUPUY, who has made a wonderful mark; MRS. F. H. BURNETT, the authoress of "Theo;" the charming and pathetic French and Russian romances of HENRY GREVILLE; the wonderful and famous fictions of GUSTAVE FLAUBERT; the brilliant and artistic works of OCTAVE FEUILLET; the highly finished and powerful stories of ERNEST DAUDET; the popular and pleasing productions of PROSPER MERIMEE; the beautiful and touching love tales of the celebrated GEORGE SAND; the clever and intensely interesting writings of JULES SANDEAU; the exciting and ingenious novels of ADOLPHE BELOT; the picturesque and enchaining works of MADAME ANGELE DUSSAUD; the exquisitely pathetic romances of the PRINCESS ALTIERI; the strong and graphic productions of ANDRE THEURIET; the wild frontier sketches of GUSTAVE AIMARD; the classic and refined works of MADAME DE STAEL; the absorbing and vivid fictions of ALEXANDER DUMAS, Pere; the natural and forcible novels of ALEXANDER DUMAS, Fils; the startling and mysterious romances of EUGENE SUE; the trenchant and unique narratives of VICTOR HUGO; the realistic novels of EMILE ZOLA, which have had a sale in this country unparalleled in the history of recent book-making; GEORGE W. M. REYNOLDS, whose romances of London life, founded on facts, are of matchless interest; SIR WALTER SCOTT, whose "Waverley" novels still maintain a strong hold on the people. CHARLES DICKENS' complete writings we furnish in every variety of style. We publish also the weird stories of GEORGE LIPPARD; the martial novels of CHARLES LEVER; the comical nautical tales of CAPTAIN MARRYAT; EMERSON BENNETT'S Indian stories; HENRY COCKTON'S laughable narratives; T. S. ARTHUR'S temperance tales and household stories; the wonderful and entertaining novels of EUGENE SUE and W. H. AINSWORTH; the quiet domestic novels of FREDRIKA BREMER and ELLEN PICKERING; the masterly novels of WILKIE COLLINS; FRANK FAIRLEGH'S quaint stories, and SAMUEL WARREN'S elaborate romances; the works of MRS. C. J. NEWBY, MRS. GREY, and MISS PARDOE; W. H. HERBERT'S sporting stories; and the graphic Italian romances of T. A. TROLLOPE; also the fascinating writings of G. P. R. JAMES, MRS. S. A. DORSEY, SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, JAMES A. MAITLAND, THE SHAKSPEARE NOVELS, CHARLES G. LELAND (Hans Breitmann), DOW'S Patent Sermons, DOESTICKS, and HENRY MORFORD, as well as FRANCATELLI'S, MISS LESLIE'S, and all the best Cook Books; Petersons' "Dollar Series of Good Novels;" Petersons' "Sterling Series" of entertaining books; Petersons' popular "Square 12mo. Series" of excellent stories; together with hundreds of others, by the best authors in the world.

☞ Look over our Catalogue, and enclose a Draft or Post Office Order for five, ten, twenty, or fifty dollars, or more, to us in a letter, and write for what books you wish, and on receipt of the money, or a satisfactory reference, the books will be packed and sent to you at once, in any way you may direct. Address all orders to

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Publishers,
306 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

☞ **Octave Feuillet's New Work.** ☜

THE HISTORY OF A PARISIENNE

(HISTOIRE D'UNE PARISIENNE.)

BEING THE STORY OF A PARISIAN WOMAN OF FASHION.

BY OCTAVE FEUILLET.

AUTHOR OF "THE COUNT DE CAMORS," "THE AMOURS OF PHILIPPE; OR, PHILIPPE'S LOVE AFFAIRS," "BELLAH," "THE LITTLE COUNTESS," ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY CHARLES RIPLEY.

In "The History of a Parisienne," Octave Feuillet makes a novel out of the materials which he finds in the upper circles of aristocratic society in France. His aim is to show how an accomplished, beautiful and amiable girl, may be transformed, by being wedded to a worthless, cynical and depraved husband, into a kind of moral monster, capable of anything and believing in nothing. He lays the blame of the ruin of many married women to the carelessness or perversity of their mothers in accepting husbands for them who are not suited to win their hearts or to understand their souls. Every page is illuminated by some bright witticism or profound observation. As a work of art, one cannot fail to get great pleasure out of the book; while for cleverness, thrilling interest, and beauty of style, it is unquestionably one of the most powerful and successful works ever put forth by this gifted author. Highly original in form and intensely dramatic, it also stands unrivalled as an example of terse and graphic character-painting; and the terrible transformation wrought in the nature of a pure and noble woman by evil associates and the brutality of a coarse and unscrupulous husband is delineated with a skill that holds the reader spell-bound to the end.

Paper Cover, 50 Cents. Morocco Cloth, Gilt and Black, $1.00.

☞ *"The History of a Parisienne"* is issued in a large square 12mo. volume, in uniform style with "The Count de Camors," "Bellah," "The Little Countess," and "The Amours of Philippe," by Octave Feuillet, and with the works of "Henry Greville," and "Emile Zola," issued by us, all of which books are for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, and on all Railroad Trains, or copies of any one, or all of the books, will be sent to any one, post-paid, on remitting their price to the Publishers,

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

PETERSONS' NEW BOOKS.

NANA'S DAUGHTER. A Continuation of and Sequel to Emile Zola's Novel of "**NANA.**" Paper, 75 cents, or $1.00 in cloth.

NANA. *By Emile Zola. A New Edition.* With an Illustrated Cover and Portraits. Price 75 cents in paper, or $1.00 in cloth.

NANA'S MOTHER; or, L'ASSOMMOIR. *By Emile Zola.* With her Portrait. Paper cover, 75 cents, or $1.00 in cloth.

THE HISTORY OF A PARISIENNE. *By Octave Feuillet,* author of "Bellah." Paper, 50 cents, or $1.00 in cloth.

THE EXILES. *A Russian Story.* Paper, 75 cents, or cloth, $1.00.

MILDRED'S CADET; or, HEARTS AND BELL-BUTTONS. *An Idyl of West Point.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.

MY HERO! *By Mrs. Forrester.* Paper, 75 cents, or cloth, $1.00.

CAMILLE; or, THE FATE OF A COQUETTE. ("*La Dame Aux Camelias.*") Paper, 75 cents, or $1.25 in cloth.

DOSIA. *By Henry Gréville.* Paper cover, 75 cents, or cloth, $1.25.

VIDOCQ! THE FRENCH DETECTIVE. With Portrait and other Engravings. Paper, 75 cents, or $1.00 in cloth.

THE EARL OF MAYFIELD. Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.

MAJOR JONES'S COURTSHIP. With 21 full-page Illustrations. Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.00 in cloth.

LINDA. *By Caroline Lee Hentz.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.

THE WOMAN IN BLACK, *being the Story of a Handsome and Ambitious Woman.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.00.

THE COUNT DE CAMORS. *By Octave Feuillet.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in cloth.

MADAME BOVARY. *A Tale of Provincial Life. By Gustave Flaubert.* His Great Book. Paper, 75 cents, or cloth, $1.00.

KATHLEEN! THEO! MISS CRESPIGNY! PRETTY POLLY PEMBERTON! and **QUIET LIFE.** *By Mrs. Burnett.* Price of each, 50 cents in paper, or $1.00 in cloth.

☞*All of the above works are for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents everywhere, and on all Rail-Road Trains, or copies of any one, or all of them, will be sent to any one, to any place, per mail, post-paid, on remitting price of the ones wanted to the Publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

Émile Zola's New Books.

The Greatest Novels Ever Printed.

NANA! The Sequel to "L'Assommoir." **NANA!** *By Émile Zola. With a Picture of "Nana" on the cover.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or One Dollar in Cloth, Black and Gold.

L'ASSOMMOIR. *By Emile Zola.* **L'ASSOMMOIR.** *With a Picture of "Gervaise," Nana's mother, on the cover.* Price 75 cents in paper, or One Dollar in Cloth, Black and Gold.

THERESE RAQUIN. *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana." With a Portrait of "Emile Zola" on the cover.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or One Dollar in Cloth, Black and Gold.

LA CUREE. *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana."* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or One Dollar in Cloth, Black and Gold.

MAGDALEN FERAT. *By Emile Zola. With a Picture of "Magdalen Férat" on the cover.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in Cloth, Black and Gold.

CLORINDA; or, Zola's Court of Napoleon III. *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana." With a Picture of "Clorinda" on the cover.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in Cloth.

ALBINE; or, The Abbe's Temptation. (La Faute de L'Abbe Mouret.) *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana." With a Picture of "Albine" on the cover.* Paper, 75 cents, cloth, $1.25.

HELENE; A LOVE EPISODE; or, Une Page D'Amour. *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana." With a Picture of "Helene" on the cover.* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in Cloth.

MIETTE; or, The Rougon-Macquart Family. (La Fortune des Rougon.) *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana."* Price 75 cents in paper; or $1.25 in Cloth, Black and Gold.

THE CONQUEST OF PLASSANS. *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana."* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in Cloth.

THE MARKETS OF PARIS. *By Emile Zola*, author of *"Nana."* Price 75 cents in paper cover, or $1.25 in Cloth.

☞ *Above Books are for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, and on all Rail-Road Trains, or copies of any one, or all of them, will be sent to any one, to any place, at once, per mail, post-paid, on remitting the price of the ones wanted to the Publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

A NEW AMERICAN STORY OF REAL LIFE.

PAUL HART;

OR,

THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE.

BY UNCLE LUTE.

A thoroughly American story of real life, without sensational exaggeration, yet full of incident, and exhibiting, in a marked manner, the various characteristics of the persons through whom the plot is simply yet artistically developed, will be welcomed by the reading public as much for its complete probability as for its well-sustained interest and originality. "PAUL HART; OR, THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE" is precisely such a romance. The scene is principally laid in New York, and the interest is mainly concentrated on the adventures of Paul Hart, from childhood to successful manhood. Of course, where there is a hero there must be a heroine. She is here in the person of Lisette Lawrence, daughter of a wealthy trader in the Empire City—a young lady of great personal and mental charms. Her character, indeed, is admirable, and the author has evidently taken infinite pains to develop it, whether amid the sunshine or storm which pervade what is called Life. She is, indeed, a realization of the poet's Phantom of Delight:

> "A perfect woman, nobly planned, to warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a spirit still, and bright with something of angelic light."

Indeed, all the women in this tale (including poor Mattie Brooks, who having after erring made a new and better life for herself) are drawn with a truthful pencil. Paul Hart, who, by his own merits and perseverance, has risen from a wretched infancy to a prosperous and distinguished manhood, is another pen-portrait of great merit. The villain of the story, one Wilks Glennerdressen, a man of wealth, considerable talents, and numerous deadly sins, is forcibly and faithfully drawn, and meets his reward at last. There is an episodal interval of action, in the country, which contrasts very pleasantly with city life. There is an under-plot, as usual, which will divide the reader's attention. But the great merit of this life-story is that it makes the career of Paul Hart its principal objective point, and a very checkered career, with its alternations of light and shade, poverty and success, it is, from first to last. It is what may be termed a domestic romance, yet the reverse of a mere fiction. That is, it is a thrilling story, so truthful even in its presentation of individual traits of character and superstitious dialogue, that many readers, no doubt, will imagine that it is literally "founded on facts." Hart, the incarnation of a self-made man, *must* be a photograph from life.—*Critic.*

Paper Cover, 75 Cents. Morocco Cloth, Gilt and Black, $1.25.

☞ *"Paul Hart; or, The Love of His Life" is for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, or copies will be sent to any one, post-paid, on remitting price to the publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

NANA'S DAUGHTER.

A CONTINUATION OF AND

SEQUEL TO ÉMILE ZOLA'S NOVEL OF "NANA."

TRANSLATED FROM ADVANCE FRENCH SHEETS

BY JOHN STIRLING.

"NANA'S DAUGHTER" HAS AN ILLUSTRATED COVER, WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE HEROINE AND OF ALL THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS IN THE WORK ON IT.

"NANA'S DAUGHTER" is a sequel to ÉMILE ZOLA'S world-famous "NANA." It will be found even more interesting than that great work—first, because it has a plot of rare excellence which is unfolded with the utmost skill; second, because the incidents are intensely dramatic and exciting; and third, because everything about it is original and utterly out of the common track of fiction. Nana is again brought upon the stage, but in a manner that is not in the least repugnant to good taste. The authors have refined her, and surrounded her with every species of Parisian elegance and luxury. Her wealth is numbered by millions, and in certain circles she is a power. Of course, she remains a schemer and profits by the weaknesses of her admirers, but she is shorn of many characteristics which in Zola's book rendered her so repulsive. Her daughter, Andrée, is in every respect her opposite, and a sweeter or more attractive creature than she has never figured in a novel. Deserted in her infancy by her unfeeling mother and thrown upon the mercies of public charity, Andrée is adopted by an upright mechanic and his wife, and is brought up in the most exemplary fashion. In the course of the tale she is environed with many temptations, but her good sense and education enable her to withstand them all and to shine the brighter in consequence of them. Nana discovers her whereabouts and endeavors to get possession of her, her efforts bringing about a series of scenes unparalleled in modern fiction, and so absorbing that they absolutely enchain attention. The authors' aim is to show that evil instincts are not hereditary, the reverse of what is maintained by Zola, and that they succeed in forcibly stating, if not in proving, their case all will admit on reading "NANA'S DAUGHTER." The other characters are drawn in masterly fashion, Pierre Naviel, d'Albigny, Luke, Lucien Despretz, Margot and Madame Adèle Despretz, as well as the Rajah, being personages especially instinct with life and naturalness. The courtship of Andrée and Lucien, with all the shadows that fall upon it, is a delicious love-idyl that everybody will admire, so tender, felicitous and touching is it, and so artistically heightened by the Rajah's hopeless passion. "NANA'S DAUGHTER" is superbly written. It is, indeed, a phenomenal work, and that it will create a sensation equal to that produced by "NANA" is certain. The translation, from the French, by John Stirling cannot be too highly commended. It is vigorous, faithful and excellent.

Paper Cover, 75 Cents. Morocco Cloth, Gilt and Black, $1.00.

☞ *"Nana's Daughter" is for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, or copies of it will be sent to any one, at once, post-paid, on remitting price to the publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

☞ **The Russian "Robinson Crusoe."** ☜

THE EXILES.

A RUSSIAN STORY.

By VICTOR TISSOT and CONSTANT AMÉRO.

"THE EXILES," by Victor Tissot and Constant Améro, will at once attract attention for many reasons. In the first place, it is an admirable love story such as everybody can appreciate. Then, it enters so fully into the details of convict life in Siberia that all will want to read it at this time, when the public mind is so much taken up with the exciting state of Russian affairs, and when every one desires to know all that can be known concerning the punishment of exile which is probably in store for those suspected of Nihilism. The hero, Yégor Séménoff, has been exiled to Siberia for political causes. There, after being rescued from the dreadful drudgery of the mines by a powerful personage who makes him his secretary, he meets Nadège Davidoff, whom he loved in Russia, and who has followed her father into banishment. At the father's death-bed he agrees to marry Nadège, and the twain plan an escape from the land of exile. The details of this escape make up the bulk of the book, and to say that they are intensely interesting would be to give but a feeble idea of their absorbing nature. The lovers, accompanied by M. Lafleur, a French dancing-master, who is an enthusiastic believer in liberty, and Ladislas, a Polish boy, and followed by Yermac, the chief of police of Yakoutsk, flee to the shores of the Arctic Ocean. The adventures of the party are varied and thrilling. They are caught in a hurricane, are attacked by wolves, fall into the clutches of the Esaoule of an ostrog or Cossack military post, discover a whaler embedded in the ice, and suffer all sorts of privations during the long and bitter cold polar night. For the remaining particulars of the plot the reader is referred to the work itself. "THE EXILES" has "Robinson Crusoe" features which will make it a vast favorite with the young, and, at the same time, its entire purity renders it a fit book to be put into the hands of any child. Older people will follow it with avidity from the first page to the last, so thickly do the exciting incidents crowd one upon another. In fact, "THE EXILES" is simply wonderful from the amount of action it contains; yet it is not in any respect sensational. The information it gives relative to Siberia is both valuable and copious, its authors, who are well-known Parisian writers, having devoted years to the study of that country, its people, institutions and peculiarities. This information is conveyed in the most felicitous and entertaining way, and is so deftly worked into the story as not to encumber it at any point. The descriptions of the aurora borealis, the mirage and the breaking up of the ice are marvellously vivid, realistic and beautiful, and the characters are so strongly drawn that they are photographed on the memory. In a word, "THE EXILES" is a masterpiece in every point of view, and those who fail to read it will miss a treat of no ordinary kind. The work of translation has been done by George D. Cox in his usual style of excellence, and the great romance is given to the American public in all its remarkable attractiveness.

Paper Cover, 75 Cents. Morocco Cloth, Gilt and Black, $1.00.

☞ *"The Exiles" is for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, or copies of "The Exiles" will be sent to any one, at once, post-paid, on remitting price to the publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

A New Novel.—An Idyl of West Point.

MILDRED'S CADET

OR,

HEARTS AND BELL-BUTTONS.

BY ALICE KING HAMILTON.

With an Illustrated Cover of Life at West Point.

"MILDRED'S CADET" is just such a novel as readers, especially the ladies, have long been looking for. It is a light, breezy, sparkling love story, charming from first to last, and full of telling points. An idyl of West Point, its sub-title, "Hearts and Bell-Buttons," sounds its key-note. Mildred, the heroine, is an only daughter. Her father, a wealthy and ambitious Pittsburgher, and her mother, a vain, silly woman, desire her to wed a man many years her senior. Of course, Mildred dislikes and despises her venerable suitor. Her parents take her to West Point to pass a few summer weeks, and there she immediately falls in love with a cadet. This brief inkling of the plot is sufficient to show the drift of the tale, and to indicate what romantic incidents must crop out as it progresses. These incidents are related in the most delightful and absorbing fashion, and are altogether devoid of those conventional namby-pamby features common to most love stories. There is a vigorous and original tone about the book that cannot help making itself felt, as all who read it will readily acknowledge. The language is crisp, the descriptions picturesque, and the characters so naturally drawn that they seem ready to step down from the pages and take part in actual life. The authoress, Alice King Hamilton, is the wife of a United States Army officer, and has all the details of West Point experiences at her finger ends; indeed, her acquaintance with the innermost details of life at the famous military academy is absolutely astonishing, and will prove a startling surprise to the cadets themselves, very many matters being touched upon in her fascinating romance which have never as yet become public property through the pen of any writer. The picture of West Point is, without doubt, exceptionally complete and graphic. Everything is most realistically and effectively depicted, and all the favorite resorts in the vicinity figure in the story. Ample attention is bestowed upon the cadets, and the reader becomes thoroughly acquainted with those interesting individuals. "MILDRED'S CADET" is just the book for summer reading, but so unusually attractive is it that it cannot come amiss at any time. That it will excite general curiosity and become vastly popular in all parts of the country does not admit of doubt. Those who once take it up will not put it down until they have finished it, and all will own that its merit is equal to its interest. The book has a beautifully illustrated cover, depicting "Taps," "Bell-Buttons," "Cupids," "Hearts," "Sabres" and other scenes characteristic of the cadets and West Point in thoroughly artistic and striking style.

Illustrated Paper Cover, 75 Cents. Morocco Cloth, Gilt and Black, $1.00.

☞ *"Mildred's Cadet" is for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, or copies of it will be sent to any one, at once, post-paid, on remitting price to the publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

"It will save many dollars."—*Lynn Mass. Reporter.*

CHEAPEST AND BEST!

PETERSON'S MAGAZINE!

FULL-SIZE PAPER PATTERNS!

☞ A SUPPLEMENT *will be given in every number for 1881, containing a full-size pattern for a lady's or child's dress. Every subscriber will receive, during the year, twelve of these patterns, worth more, alone, than the subscription price.* ☜

"PETERSON'S MAGAZINE" contains every year, 1000 pages, 14 steel plates, 12 colored Berlin patterns, 12 mammoth colored fashion plates, 24 pages of music, and about 900 wood cuts. Its principal embellishments are

Superb Steel Engravings!

Its immense circulation enables its proprietor to spend more on embellishments, stories, &c., than any other. *It gives more for the money, and combines more merits, than any in the world.* In 1881, a NEW FEATURE will be introduced in the shape of a series of

SPLENDIDLY ILLUSTRATED ARTICLES.

ITS TALES AND NOVELLETS

Are the best published anywhere. *All the most popular writers are employed to write originally for "Peterson."* In 1881 FIVE ORIGINAL COPYRIGHT NOVELETS will be given, by Ann S. Stephens, by Frank Lee Benedict, by Jane G. Austin, by the author of "Josiah Allen's Wife," and by Sidney Trevor.

MAMMOTH COLORED FASHION PLATES

Ahead of all others. These plates are engraved on steel, TWICE THE USUAL SIZE, and are unequalled for beauty. They will be superbly colored Also, household and other receipts; and articles on everything interesting to ladies.

TERMS (Always in Advance) $2.00 A YEAR.

☞UNPARALLELED OFFERS TO CLUBS.☜

2 Copies for $3.50 **3 " " 4.50**	With a copy of the premium picture (24 x 20) *a costly steel engraving* "GRAN'FATHER TELLS OF YORKTOWN" or an illustrated ALBUM, *quarto, gilt*, to the person getting up the club.
4 Copies for $6.50 **6 " " 9.00**	With an extra copy of the Magazine for 1881, as a premium, to the person getting up the club.
8 Copies for $8.00 **10 " " 10.50**	With both an extra copy of the Magazine for 1881, and the premium picture, or Album, to the person getting up the club.

FOR LARGER CLUBS STILL GREATER INDUCEMENTS!

Address, post-paid,

CHARLES J. PETERSON,

306 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

☞Specimens sent gratis, if written for, to get clubs with.

Over One Hundred Editions sold in Paris.

MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY.

A SERIES OF CONFESSIONS.

BY GUSTAVE DROZ.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY REAVEL SAVAGE.

With an Illustrated Paper Cover, with Portraits of Monsieur, Madame and the Baby on it.

"MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY," by Gustave Droz, is truly a phenomenal work, full of rare beauty, shrewd sense, genial philosophy, telling humor and touching pathos. As a faithful picture of life it has never been equalled and probably never will be. So eminently successful has it proved in Paris that it has run through over a hundred editions, and it is altogether safe to predict similar popularity for it here; indeed, it should create as marked a sensation as "Helen's Babies," a book to which it is in every way vastly superior. "MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY" is in three parts, treating respectively of "The Bachelor," "Housekeeping," and "The Family." It consists of a series of studies, essays or tales, all neatly linked together and forming the complete history of a young man, a husband, a wife and a baby. There is hardly a point in the careers of these interesting beings that is not treated of in the most exhaustive fashion; indeed, the intense realism of the book is fully on a par with that of anything Zola ever wrote, while Droz's extreme delicacy gives an indescribable piquancy to every incident, no matter how trifling. The book is thoroughly Parisian and extremely vivacious, Droz's aim being to contrast the wild joys of the young bachelor with the enjoyments of married life, and to prove that true happiness is to be found only in the family, where husband and wife are softened, delighted and made better by the innocent gambols and wonderful prattle of the baby. The subtile influence of the charming little creature is felt in every direction and under all circumstances. Droz is an adept in the art of painting such a baby as is met with every day, and so vivid and truthful is the picture he has drawn that every father and mother in the land will instantly fall in love with it. The baby of the book is a boy, a man in miniature who builds sand mountains, plays soldier and romps in the garden of the Luxembourg, who trots beside his father in the autumn rain in the country, who wades in pools of water in his laced boots, who asks a thousand perplexing questions, who is always terribly hungry, who pays New Year's visits with his parents and does not like to kiss old ladies, who fights pillow battles with his father in bed, who gets so sick that he nearly dies, who says and does things to be like papa, and who, in fine, is such a delightfully natural little fellow that everybody will be sorry to leave him at the end of the bewitching volume. "MONSIEUR, MADAME AND THE BABY" has been faithfully translated, all the elegance of Droz's style being retained and all his humor effectively reproduced. No one can afford to miss reading it, for it is without doubt the most interesting and fascinating book of the present day.

Illustrated Paper Cover, 75 Cents. Morocco Cloth, Gilt and Black, $1.00.

☞ *"Monsieur, Madame and the Baby" is for sale by all Booksellers and News Agents, or copies will be sent to any one, post-paid, on remitting price to the publishers,*

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS, Philadelphia, Pa.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
00014985384